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The House Next Door

A DETECTIVE STORY
BY POLICE CAPTAIN HOWARD

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THE HOUSE NEXT-DOOR

A DETECTIVE STORY

By POLICE CAPTAIN HOWARD

CHAPTER ONE

"IT'S the most mysterious case I ever heard of, inspector," said Patrolman Kelly, when he reported at headquarters in answer to a summons from O'Brien. "The telephone call came into the 3— precinct at 10,30 to-night. A frightened maid was on the wire. She said her employer was David Garson, the noted criminal lawyer. He came home from business at seven o'clock, ate his supper in his home at No. — Madison avenue, retired to his bedroom on the second floor at nine o'clock, and at ten o'clock the girl heard a single pistol shot and rushed up to Garson's room. He was missing. A search of the house followed, with no result. The back hall-room door was locked, and the key was in the keyhole on the inside. I broke open the door, and found Garson lying on the floor dead. A bullet had pierced his brain, but there was no revolver in the room. In fact the room was empty. It did not even have a window through which the shot might have been fired, no bullet had gone through the door or wall, ceiling or floor, and yet there he lay—dead from a bullet wound.

The inspector was a taciturn man. He merely nodded, leaned over his desk, and beckoned to a tall young fellow who was seated near the window smoking a cigar.

"Case for you to unravel, Fred," he remarked tersely. "Kelly's account sounds fishy. Investigate the matter, will you? See if the shot was fired through the keyhole."

Robinson nodded and left the office.

He was a clean-shaven, well-dressed man, with a pleasant air and genteel personality, yet they accounted him as one of the shrewdest detectives in the Central Office.

When he reached the street and entered a taxi, he was carried uptown, and alighted at the Garson residence. Kelly had posted a policeman at the door who knew the sleuth by sight, and permitted him to pass in, when the maid opened the door in answer to a ring.

Robinson displayed his shield to the girl in the hall, at the same time giving her a searching glance to see if she were connected with the commission of the crime. She was evidently a Scandinavian, with an innocent-looking face, a trim little figure, and of neat appearance.

"I'm an officer of the law," said the detective smilingly. "They've sent me to investigate Mr. Garson's death. May I ask your name, miss?"

"My name is Lena Shogstrum," she answered nervously.

"Are you the only servant employed here?"

"Yes, sir."

"Who lived here with Mr. Garson?"

"Nobody."

"Do you know any of his relatives?"

"He didn't have any. They are all dead."

"But he must have had friends calling here?"

"Oh, no. He was a peculiar man, and never had callers."

"Are you positive no one called on him to-night?"

"I could swear to it."

"Then somebody must have broken in after he retired."

"I thought of that, too, and examined all the doors and windows which I had carefully locked for the night, but did not find any of them unfastened. You can see for yourself."

She led him around, and he found her statement to be correct.

When they reached the door of the little hall-room in which the policeman found the body of David Garson, the detective saw that it had been broken open. The keyhole bore no powder marks.

"Do you know if your employer had any enemies?" he asked the maid. "Most men do have enemies, you know."

"I do not know," answered Lena, shaking her head. "He never told me anything about his private affairs."

The detective did not think the lawyer would confide in his servant, but he made no answer, and stepped into the room where the body lay.

It was illuminated by a single gasjet, by the light of which the officer saw that there was no furniture or carpet in the room. Garson lay flat on his face in the middle of the floor, and had been bleeding from a wound in the back of his skull. He was fully dressed.

The officer glanced at him, then noticed that there were no windows in the room. The brass key was in the lock on the inside, and a burnt match lay on the floor under the gas fixture. As far as Robinson could see, there was not a single clue in the little room that might be of service to unravel the mystery of the lawyer's death.

"Aren't you going in?" asked the maid, who stood watching him.

"Not yet," he smiled. "Have you been in there?"

"No indeed! I'm afraid. But the policeman was in."

"Anybody else?"

"Not a soul."

"What was this room used for?"

"It was intended for a storeroom. I once scrubbed it, about a year ago, locked it up, and gave the key to Mr. Garson. But he never put anything in the room, and I'm pertty sure he never entered it until to-night. I cannot imagine why he went in there."

"By Jove, it certainly is mysterious," admitted the detective. "Where were you when you heard the pistol shot?"

"Up in my bedroom on the next floor rear, sir."

"Just above this room?"

"No. Over his bedroom, which is next to this storeroom."

"Was Mr. Garson a bachelor or a widower?"

"He never mentioned to me what he was."

"That's all for the present, Lena. You go downstairs to the parlor floor, and remain on guard. If any one comes in, call me. You'll help me, won't you?"

"Why, of course I will!" she answered in a burst of confidence. "If somebody killed Mr. Garson, I want you to catch and punish him, for my boss was very good to me, and I would like to see the one who killed him put in prison."

The detective smiled and nodded, and she went downstairs.

The moment she was gone, the detective was galvanized into action. He drew an electric flashlight and a powerful magnifying glass from his pocket, dropped down upon his knees on the threshold, and keenly examined the floor. A room closed for a year, he figured, would surely be coated with dust in which footprints must show. Nor was he mistaken, for he easily discerned Kelly's hobnailed tracks from the door to the corpse and back again. The only other footprints in the dust were those made by the lawyer, and simply led from the door to the middle of the room, where he fell just as he reached that spot.

Positive that there were no other footprints, Robinson went into the room, a puzzled and baffled expression in his gray eyes. This case was evidently going to be a hard one to solve.

"Not a mortal entered this room except Garson, and the officer who afterward found his remains," muttered the detective. "The question is why did the lawyer come into the room? That's the key to the mystery."

Hoping that a solution of the problem might be found on the person of the deceased, Robinson searched his pockets, but failed to find anything

but a penknife and a pocketbook containing a trifle over fifty dollars.

He then noted the position of the body. It lay with the head pointed toward the partition dividing the storeroom from his bedroom. When shot from the rear, he had evidently pitched forward upon his face. As the shot came from behind, it must have come from the side of the room where the Garson residence joined the house next door.

With this hypothesis firmly fixed in his mind, the detective made a careful examination of the paper wall. The paper did not seem to be broken anywhere by a pistol bullet, which seemed to prove conclusively that the ball had not come through that wall.

"And yet the bullet must have been fired from the direction of this wall," muttered Robinson decisively. "Garson's footprints show that he took three steps into this room, then he turned, facing toward his own bedroom, when the bullet went crashing into the back of his head from behind him, and he pitched forward, falling face downward. Whoever fired the fatal shot stood behind him. That means the murderer was between him and this brick party-wall. This idea seems all right, but how about the door being locked on the inside? If a criminal was in this room, and killed Garson, how could he leave the room if it was locked on the inside? There is only one supposition. After he shot his victim and left the room, Garson might have had life enough to have locked the door after the murderer went out, fearing the crook might return to attack him. But Garson's footprints contradict this theory, as they show that he merely entered the room, turned sidewise, and fell dead."

The detective turned the matter over in his mind to form another theory which might explain the perplexing mystery, but nothing came of it, and he went back to the party-wall to examine it again. He thought he might find a hole in the wall through which the bullet sped on its errand of death. Nothing of the sort came to light, however. Then he analyzed the suicide theory, but abandoned it when the most careful search failed to reveal a pistol which Garson might have used.

Robinson was very much disgusted over his failure. He knew the mystery had an explanation, but realized he could not solve it offhand.

When he went downstairs he found Lena in the parlor floor hall.

"Did the policeman who was here take anything out of the room where the dead man lies?" he asked the girl.

"I don't think so," she answered gravely. "I showed him up to the room, and stood close by when he broke in the door. I was watching him when he ran into the room, lit the gas, dropped the burned match on the floor, and fell on his knees beside the body to examine it. The moment he saw that Mr. Garson was dead, he glanced around the room carefully and came out. I am sure I would have seen him if he had taken anything away."

"I refer to a pistol," said the detective.

"Oh, no. He could not have picked up such a thing and taken it without my seeing him do it," asserted Lena with conviction.

"I am going to search the house now. I want to find something that might throw some light on this mystery. Where did Mr. Garson keep his private papers?"

"He did all his home work in his bedroom, sir."

The detective went up to the room, and carefully searched the papers that he thought might be of value, and putting them in his pocket, he finally went back to Lena.

"Who lives next-door to you on that side?" he asked, pointing to the side from which he deducted that the shot came from.

"Daisy Dean, the actress," answered Lena promptly.

"Who lives with her?"

"Only a maid, who acts as her star dresser at the theatre."

"Was Mr. Garson acquainted with her?"

"Not to my knowledge."

Robinson felt very much like swearing from vexation, as everything seemed to baffle his endeavors to solve the riddle. He slipped a five-dollar bill into Lena's hand, and asked her to keep his investigation a secret for a while. She readily assented, and he glanced at his watch, and saw that it was now twelve o'clock. Wishing Lena good-night, he went out on the front stoop, where the solitary policeman was still on guard.

"Did you find anything, Mr. Robinson?" asked the officer curiously.

"Nothing tangible yet. Have you seen any one go into the house next-door since you began duty here?"

"Not a person. The house is dark and silent, as if all the inmates had gone to bed. There was only one light on the top floor, but that was put out just before you came in."

"Haven't you noticed any one looking out the windows?"

"No, sir. The place looks like a morgue."

"Isn't that a telephone wire going in at the upper floor?"

"Looks like it. Do you think——"

"Hush! Step up here, in the vestibule—quick!"

As they sank back into the gloom, a taxi came rolling down the street and paused before the house next-door. As the detective cautiously peered around the door frame, he saw by the street electric light that a beautiful young girl in an ultra-fashionable gown had alighted from the vehicle followed by a girl in a black dress and maid's cap and apron. The young woman paid the chauffeur, and both ascended the front stoop, opened the door, and entered the house.

"Daisy Dean, the actress, and her maid," whispered Robinson.

"Some chicken," grinned the policeman. "I suppose they are just getting home from the show at the Garden."

"No doubt," assented Fred dryly. "You saw

them both, didn't you? Well, the girl inside informed me that those two women were the only occupants of the house next-door. They've both been away to the theatre since early in the evening, and yet you told me you saw a light in the upper story which some one extinguished a short time ago."

"Lena may have been mistaken about the number of people living in there," ventured the cop.

"I doubt it. She's a keen girl. I have some reason to be suspicious of the inmates of that house. I think I'll take a trip in there and have an interview with the actress."

"Have you got anything on her, Mr. Robinson?"

"Not yet, but there's no telling what a little investigating may do. Don't leave this doorway until you are relieved from the police station. Do you understand?"

"All right, sir."

"This is a serious case. I don't want you to discuss it with any one except your captain—understand?"

"I'm on. One can't even trust the policemen, as some of them talk and spoil a good thing by innocently tipping off the very one a bull may be after."

"I see you are wise. Men like you get promoted, you know."

The cop grinned, and Robinson left him, and went next-door. When he rang the bell he was rather surprised.

"Miss Dean," said Fred, tipping his derby, "I'm an officer from headquarters, and wish to see you on important business."

The girl's pretty face took on a startled expression, and she eyed him rather suspiciously until he displayed his badge.

"You must pardon me for doubting you," she said hastily. "You know how women in my profession are pestered by brainless mashers. Won't you come in?"

"Thank you, I will. My business is strictly private, and the vestibule is hardly the right place to impart what I have to say to you."

She retreated into the dimly lighted hall, followed by the detective. But he had scarcely closed the door behind him when he heard a horrible curse, and looking up he beheld a man half-way down the stairs, glaring at him with the most murderous expression he had ever seen in human eyes.

He was a young fellow in shabby clothes, with close-cropped red hair and a vivid scar crossing his left cheek. Bent over, and showing his teeth in a frenzied snarl, he crouched there like a savage beast about to pounce on its prey.

In an instant the detective recognized him as an ex-convict whom he had once arrested and had sent to Sing Sing on a charge of burglary.

"Red Leary!" he exclaimed, in startled tones.

The crook made a sudden flying leap down upon the detective, and they crashed to the floor. As they rolled over, Leary got astride of the officer's body and jammed his left hand down on Fred's throat, choking him. He held a revolver by the barrel in his right hand, and raising it, he brought the butt down on the detective's skull with all his strength. A groan escaped the officer, and everything became black as his senses left him.

CHAPTER TWO

A MAGNIFICENT bedroom greeted Fred's sight when he revived. There was a bandage around his head, and daylight was streaming in through the windows upon the bed he occupied. He could not imagine where he was, for no one was with him, and a deathly silence prevailed. There was a throbbing pain in his head where Red Leary's pistol hit him. His clothing had been taken off and was neatly folded on a chair, a glass of ice water stood on a small table at his bedside, and the air was sweetly scented, as if with cologne.

"Can't be a hospital," he reflected. "The place looks like a lady's boudoir. Must be Daisy Dean's bedroom. She's probably responsible for my being here. That crook missed killing me by inches all right, but he certainly gave me an awful wallop."

At that moment the hall door softly opened and the pretty little actress glided into the room clad in a Japanese kimono and hurried to the bedside.

"Ah! You have recovered consciousness, I see!" she exclaimed, with an expression of intense relief. "You remained senseless so long after we put you in bed that we feared for your life."

"It was very kind of you to care for me this way," he answered gratefully. "Did Red Leary get away?"

"He escaped out the front door a moment after he knocked you out," explained Miss Dean. "The man must have broken in to rob me during my absence. You see, I had to report at the theatre for work at seven o'clock, and I did not get back home until twelve, so you see he had plenty time to operate."

"Then he burglarized your home?"

"I only missed a small amount of cash. When you were attacked, you said you had some private business with me."

"David Garson, the man next-door, was mysteriously murdered."

"Yes. I read the extras about it this morning. Wasn't it dreadful? I was not acquainted with the gentleman, but he seemed to be a quiet and eminently respectable man."

"It was my duty to investigate the crime," said Robinson, "and I found a few letters in his possession that might throw some light on this mystery. The letters show that he was retained by an old gentleman in Louisiana by the name of John Manley——"

"Manley!" cried the actress in startled tones. "Why—that was my mother's maiden name. Her full name was Isola Manley."

"Queer," commented Fred. "John Manley wrote Lawyer Garson a brief history of his case. He said he had cast off his daughter twenty-five years ago for marrying an actor named Ralph Dean——"

"My father!" the astonished girl interrupted.

"Perhaps. Old Mr. Manley was rich. He repented his harshness and sent Garson $25,000 worth of bonds and a photograph of his daughter to identify her. If Garson found her, he was to give her the bonds or, failing in that, he was ordered to pay the bonds to any heirs Isola Manley Dean may have left."

"Then Mr. Manley must have been my grandfather, and as my parents are dead, the inheritance would come to me," cried Miss Dean excitedly.

"Exactly. What brought me in here after I had seen you was the remarkable resemblance you bear your mother. It aroused my suspicion that you were Isola Dean, but upon consideration I realize that had she lived she would now be twice your age. Feel in the breast pocket of my coat, hand me the bundle of papers you will find there, and I will show you Isola Dean's photograph."

The actress complied, and when he handed her a small carte-de-visite style of picture, she saw what looked like a photograph of herself. The resemblance was wonderful.

"How strange this all is!" the actress could not help saying as she studied the picture. "I have a duplicate of this photograph. It is unquestionably my mother's picture."

"I am quite sure of that," smiled Fred. "But, unfortunately, Mr. Garson is now dead, and that may make it difficult to gain possession of the legacy he held in trust for you. If you wish I shall make an effort to have this matter settled for you."

"Oh! Will you? I would be so grateful!"

"I'll make a call at Garson's office, and see what I can do about it."

While speaking he had been covertly watching the play of emotion upon Miss Dean's pretty features, and found, to his surprise, that he was beginning to fall in love with her. She seemed to be well bred, frank and honest enough, and there was a subtle charm in her manner that fascinated the detective. He had never before taken much interest in women. In fact all his worst professional experiences had been with the fair sex, causing him to stamp them as artful, cunning and so deceptive that no man could trust them. His new acquaintance with Daisy Dean caused him to modify this opinion, as it showed him that there were exceptions whom he had not yet met.

Fred could see by the girl's manner that she had taken a fancy to him, but with his usual cynicism he attributed it to the fact that she expected to profit through his efforts.

She brought him a dainty breakfast, cooked by her maid, and chatted freely about her past life before the footlights. It was her desire to quit the theatrical profession, although she was now in the zenith of her popularity as a Broadway favorite. The business contained too many evil temptations and she was sick and tired of the charm and hypocrisy of it. She longed for the unconventional country where simplicity and honesty gave women easy consciences.

About noontime she left him, to report for the matinee, and gave him strict orders not to leave the bed until her return.

But she was no sooner out of the house when the detective leaped from the bed, tore the bandage from his head, and getting into his clothing, he left the room.

"This floor is on the same level as the floor next-door, where Garson was killed," he reflected. "The shot came from the direction of this house. I've got a magnificent chance now to see what was on a line with the room of death."

At the rear of the hall was a bathroom, which stood next to the empty storeroom in which Garson was shot. Fred glided into it and took a keen survey of the place. The floor was covered with marble tiles which were carried up the sidewalls all the way to the ceiling. There was a small gas fixture on the wall that divided the room from Garson's death chamber, but the closest scrutiny failed to show a single opening in the wall.

"It seems absurd to think that any one could have stood in this room and shot through the wall, killing the lawyer in the next house," he reflected. "I've examined every inch of these tiles, but can't find a break as big as a pin's head."

He went out in the hall, and inspected the wall there, with no better result, and finally desisted.

"It isn't logical to suspect that the shot came from anywhere but this house," he muttered, "yet there isn't a thing I can find to substantiate that theory. I'll give it up here and run over to the theatre. I want to make sure that the actress was at the performance from seven till midnight."

He left the house and hastened across town.

There was an old Irishman on guard at the stage door, and the detective explained who he was, and asked the man:

"Was you on duty here last night?"

"I was, sor," answered the doorkeeper, puffing at his pipe.

"What time did Daisy Dean come in?"

"Exactly seven o'clock be me time sheet."

"And what time did she leave for home?"

"Half-past eleven."

"Then she was inside from seven to eleven-thirty, eh?"

"All exceptin' a trip she made at half-past nine, durin' intermission."

"So she left the theatre for a while at that hour, did she?"

"Faith she came runnin' out, all pale an' excited, with her make-up on, jumped into a waitin'

taxi, an' dhrove away like ther divvle. She was late gettin' back. It must have been quarther past tin she flew inside, an' just got in ther wings in toime fer her cue."

"Did she tell you where she went, or what excited her?"

"Divvle a bit, sor."

The detective's suspicions were aroused by the peculiar action of Miss Dean, for, according to Lena's version, the shot that killed Mr. Garson was fired about ten o'clock, and that was just the hour that the actress was away from the theatre."

He questioned the stage doorkeeper more closely, but failed to elicit any further information that might be of importance. Fred's new discovery worried him.

He had no desire to get the pleasant little actress into trouble, yet he felt that her strange actions needed some plausible explaining.

"What in the world was she up to?" he wondered in perplexity.

The case was mysterious enough without becoming more involved, he thought, and as for Daisy being guilty of the deed, it seemed simply ridiculous.

Yet the strange actions of the girl would persist in forcing themselves upon his mind in a disagreeable way, until he actually began to dread carrying his investigation any further.

"What reason would she have to kill the man?" he growled.

Nothing had developed to show that any antagonism existed beween Daisy and her neighbor, nor was there any evidence upon which to base the supposition that she was the accessory of another person.

"I'll go in and have a talk with her," he decided. "She may be able to give me a very simple and reasonable explanation of her seemingly mysterious actions."

His detective badge gained him entrance to the stage where a bewildering scene met his view from one of the wings.

The orchestra was playing the popular air of a musical comedy, and the principals in the cast were before the footlights singing while the projecting machine in the gallery threw colored lights down upon them.

All the chorus girls, clad in tights, were scampering about behind the scenes. Three of them, in ballet dancers' costumes, were hanging around a white-haired old rounder in a dress suit and silk hat, patting his cheeks, punching him and calling him "papa." The weasened old rascal was chuckling with delight, and idiotically distributing a few ten-dollar bills among them for chocolates. In a corner one of the painted beauties was chewing gum, pulling on a slipper and puffing a cigarette all at the same time.

Stage carpenters were working up in the flies, scene shifters were preparing a set for the second act, and the property man was supplying them with necessary appurtenances. A glance through a peephole showed Fred that a sea of faces loomed up in the auditorium, as the house was packed. He saw Daisy Dean on the stage with the leading man, and noticed that she suddenly paused in the midst of her lines, and stood glaring at a man seated in the orchestra chairs, with every evidence of the most intense nervous excitement.

"By thunder, it's Red Leary!" he muttered in startled tones as he looked to see what occasioned the girl's evident alarm.

There sat the crook in an aisle seat, clad in a stylish suit, actually watching the performance. When he saw how his presence agitated the girl a cold-blooded smile swept his evil features and he made her a swift gesture. She nodded back at him, and recovering her composure by an effort, she resumed her work, and the play went on.

"She knows him all right," reflected the detective grimly, "and she seems to be afraid of the young devil."

This idea made him very uneasy, for he realized that Daisy had grossly deceived him by pretending he was merely a thief who had broken into her house.

At the close of the second act, Miss Dean almost ran into Fred's arms as the curtain descended and the audience applauded.

"You here!" she gasped in astonishment.

"I came to ask why you left the theatre last night at half-past nine, and did not return in your taxi until ten o'clock."

A startled, half-frightened expression crept into her eyes, and her face became as pale as death. She darted a quick, scared glance at his stern, questioning features, and gasped; but a moment later she regained control of herself.

"Mr. Robinson," she answered coolly, "what I do is none of your business. I do not think I am accountable to you for my actions."

"It was at the time of your mysterious trip that Mr. Garson was shot," the detective went on, in hard, metallic tones.

"Then you imply that you suspect me of the crime?"

"It is my business to suspect everybody who might have done it. The reason I distrust you is because I just saw the evidence that you have already deceived me."

"Indeed!" she retorted icily, and she drew herself up and recoiled.

"Now don't let one lie beget another," admonished Fred. "Red Leary is down there in the audience. I saw him. You disclaimed all knowledge of him—said he was just some thief who had broken into your house and stole some money. But when I saw you get a signal from him just now, I realized that you were acquainted with him. Now then, what was that crook doing in your house on the night of the murder?"

The girl stared at Robinson with an intensely troubled expression, her fingers working and her eyelids twitching, but she did not lose her nerve.

"I refuse to answer any of your silly and annoying questions!" she declared defiantly. "If

you wish to implicate me in that crime, go ahead and do so. I cannot prevent you. Arrest me, if you like. When I'm brought into court and placed on trial, I do not mind answering questions, but I'll be hanged if I will let you quiz me without any legal authority to compel me to answer!"

She darted an angry glance at him and he made an effort to conciliate her, but she flounced away and disappeared behind her dressing-room door.

"Guess I've made a fool of myself," muttered Fred. "Here I love the girl and yet I insult her with vague suspicions. As a matter of fact, if I knew she killed Garson, I believe I would not arrest her, although it would be my sworn duty to do so."

Feeling very glum over the bad impression he had made on the pretty little actress, he went out in the street and made his way into the theatre foyer, where he waited for the show to end and Leary to come out. He made up his mind to shadow the man and find out what he was doing, for somehow the impression persisted in his mind that the thief was in some way connected with the Garson murder.

It was after five when the final curtain was rung down and the audience began to swarm out through the doors.

Within a short time Fred had Leary located, and followed the man down the street in the throng. The crook made no attempt to board a car, but struck across town, and the officer dogged his footsteps at a safe distance, easily keeping him in view.

To Fred's surprise Leary made a beeline for Daisy Dean's private residence, and running up the stoop, he drew out a latch key, opened the door, and vanished inside.

"Must be the actress's lover or husband, or he would not have that key," cogitated the detective grimly. "It's only another evidence of the fact that she deceived me. The actresses are all alike."

He could not follow the man in, so he darted into Garson's area, rang the bell, and Lena came to the door.

"Oh, Mr. Robinson!" she exclaimed. "I am glad to see you, sir. But they have taken Mr. Garson's body away for burial, and I've been left all alone here to take care of the house."

"Then you can help me, Lena. I tracked a suspicious party into the house next-door. How many skylights are there on the roof?"

"Two. One lights the hall, the other the back bedroom."

"Then the house next-door must have the same. I may get a glimpse of the man I'm after if I can get up on the roof."

"Then come up. There's a ladder in the hall closet to the scuttle."

She led him upstairs, and he made his way to the roof. From behind a chimney he saw the scuttle of the Dean residence cautiously raised, and the next moment the head and shoulders of Leary came up through the chimney.

He strode over to the dividing wall, leaped across to the Garson roof, and Fred suddenly stepped from behind the chimney in front of him.

"Hello, Leary!" he sung out. "Where are you going?"

The thief paused and uttered a suppressed oath.

"I thought I'd finished you!" he snarled, and his hand flew to his hip pocket, but before he had time to draw his gat Robinson's automatic was staring him in the eye.

"None of that!" snapped the detective.

"You'll have to fight to get me!" sneered the crook, and with a rush he reached Fred and gripped his arm.

With a wrench he forced the gun from the detective's hand, but Fred grappled him, and a struggle began. Both were powerful men, both were desperate, and the battle for supremacy became terrific. They fought all over the tin roof. At one moment Leary had the advantage, and the next instant Robinson reversed the situation. The crook finally secured a vise-like grip on Fred's throat, and they backed over to the edge of the roof.

It flashed into the officer's mind that his opponent meant to throw him down into the yard, and he fought with all his strength to baffle the crook's design.

But it was useless, for Leary unexpectedly tripped him, and giving him a terrific shove, he sent Robinson reeling backward to the rotten galvanized gutter. There sounded a crunching noise as the rusted metal gave way beneath Robinson's weight, and the next instant a sickened sensation went through his stomach as he felt himself plunging down through space to what seemed almost certain death.

The panting of the crook ceased, and he heard a curse and the words uttered in malevolent tones:

"Well, here's where I get even with you!"

CHAPTER THREE

"I thought you'd end up in the hospital," growled Chief O'Brien, and he cheered ferociously at the butt of a cigar stuck in the corner of his mouth. "When you told me you were after Red Leary, I knew he'd get you somehow before you could put the nippers on him. Now he has not only nearly broken your neck, but he made a getaway in the bargain."

"That guy has got me puzzled," said Robinson, as he lay back on the cot, his head, arm and body neatly bandaged. "I can't imagine why he went up through the actress's house to the roof. It was the last thing in my mind when he fired me over the coping; it buzzed through my nut as I plunged down through the air and hit the shut-

ter and the grape arbor before I landed on the grass plot stiff and senseless. If it wasn't for the neighbor who saw what happened, no ambulance would have been called to cart me here, and I might have bled to death from my cuts."

"I've sent out a general alarm to all the precincts to keep a lookout for the bird who nicked you," said the chief, "and we may pick him up at any moment. And, believe me, he's going to get all that's coming to him if we land on him, Fred."

"The doctor says I'll be out of here to-morrow, as no bones were broken, and there were no internal injuries. I expect I'll limp a bit and swing a bum arm for a while, but that isn't going to stop me from looking for Red myself. Send me a search warrant. I'm going into the Dean girl's house without knocking next time I see Leary snooping around the place."

The chief grunted and went away.

Next morning Robinson left the hospital, carrying as few bandages and strips of court plaster as possible, jumped into a taxi and was driven to Temple Bar.

The directory gave him the number of Garson's office, an elevator carried him up, and an office boy inquired his business.

"I want Garson's office manager," said Fred gruffly.

One of the law clerks answered to this description.

"You know, of course, that the boss is dead," he began.

"I'm here to search for a clue to his murderers," answered Fred, showing his badge, "and I want truthful answers to a few questions so I can solve that baffling mystery."

"Shoot!" said the clerk laconically.

Robinson asked him all sorts of questions that brought out no suspicious circumstances, and finally inquired:

"Wasn't Mr. Garson trustee of some bonds held for an heiress of John Manley—about a quarter of a million dollars' worth of them?"

"He was. The bonds came by express, and he took the package home."

"Are you sure he did not deposit them in any vaults?"

"Positive, for he took them home on the night he was killed."

"Give me the numbers of the bonds."

The clerk got the necessary description from a book, and handed the memorandum to the officer, saying:

"These bonds must be among the personal effects at his house, Mr. Robinson. I hope you have found them."

"They are missing," answered the detective.

"Stolen by Mr. Garson's murderer?" asked the clerk, aghast.

"Probably, as I've searched Garson's home very carefully and failed to turn up anything like a bond. It's beginning to dawn upon my mind that those bonds must have been the cause of the lawyer's death. The murderer may have killed him to steal them."

"Possibly! Possibly! That seems to clear up the mystery of the hidden motive for the crime that has been puzzling us."

"As the bonds were negotiable, you had better send out a general alarm to banks all over the country to refuse to buy them and to notify the authorities here if they are offered for sale. By adopting this course we may be able to locate the criminal."

The law clerk assented, then permitted Fred to search the safe, examine Garson's personal papers and rummage in his desk. The result brought to light an interesting letter from one of the pigeonholes. It was couched in the following language:

"Garson: I've been tipped off that Manley sent you the bonds, and as I suspect you mean to swipe them, I want you to split fifty-fifty. Double-cross me, and I'll get you with a bullet as sure as God made little apples. You did not know it, but I've found a way to keep you under observation day and night. You'll get your dose at the first sign of treachery. Look out, now. If I do not get my share by nine o'clock to-night by a messenger, at my new hangout, I'll know you refuse and you'll have to take the consequence."

That significant note, written in a man's handwriting with pencil on a common sheet of letter paper, was not signed, and the writing was blurred, as if the writer had fingered it a great deal.

"If he did handle it, he must have got some of the graphite on his skin, and that would cause him to leave fingerprints on the paper," reflected the detective. "I'll soon find out, and if there are any prints, they may lead to the identification of the murderer. It's pretty clear that Garson was acquainted with the man, and failed to divide the bonds with him. That led the crook to shoot the lawyer. But what became of the securities? They are not to be found in Garson's home or office, and the clerk assured me he did not have a safe-deposit vault, nor did he deposit them in his bank."

Finding that he could not learn anything else of importance, the detective departed and went up to the Central Office. Making his way into the record office, he had a talk with the man in charge, and a fingerprint apparatus was produced.

It was conceded that an oil moisture of the fingers leaves a lasting impression on such things as paper, etc., and to bring out a faint imprint the detective dropped a white powder on the letter. Instantly it brought into bold relief a number of fingerprints in which the graphite played a subtle part. These prints were next enlarged by photography, to bring out the type of arch, tented arch, radial loop, ulnar loop, whorl, or double curve.

It was seen that two people handled the paper, for one was of the common whorl variety and the other a tented arch. The detective had obtained a fingerprint of Garson's hand on other objects, and saw at a glance that he had made the tented arch while reading the letter. The whorl was impressed by the writer, and it contained several clearly defined deltas.

Robinson handed the whorl markings to the attendant.

"Open the records of criminals' fingerprints, and see if you can find a duplicate of this," he remarked.

The man nodded, and while he was busy carrying out instructions Robinson idly examined the Bertillon measurement system. Within ten minutes the attendant sung out:

"Here it is! I've found a duplicate of your fingerprints, Fred."

He handed him the record book, and pointed at a front and profile photograph, under which was a name, description, measurements, and fingerprints.

"Red Leary, eh?" asked Robinson. "Humph! Just the guy I expected."

He made a careful comparison of the prints, glanced over the crooks' criminal record, and had his attention arrested by a line under the record, saying:

"Past life a mystery, but evidently comes of a good family."

The detective wondered if this was the secret of the lawyer's former acquaintance with the notorious crook, for it seemed odd that an aristocratic gentleman like Garson would have been on intimate terms with a criminal of Leary's stamp unless there was a potent underlying reason for it. Turning this phase of the case over in his mind, the detective finally left the Central Office.

He knew where Red Leary spent most of his leisure time, and headed straight for the man's favorite haunt. This place happened to be a basement saloon on Second avenue near Third street, and was frequented by booze runners and coke dealers, pickpockets and thieves.

When he went in the fat German behind the bar whistled to the loafers playing cards and shooting pool, and every glass of illicit liquor was drained in a flash. They all knew the detective by sight as well as he knew them, and favored him with surly glances which betrayed their undying hatred.

Those who were guilty of recent crimes took on an uneasy expression, as they did not know but what the officer had come in to pick them up.

Robinson shot a keen, searching glance around the smoky barroom, but failed to see his man.

"Looking for any one in particular?" asked the boss carelessly.

"Want me to tell so you can tip him off, don't you?" asked Fred.

"No, no. I only wanted to help you," lied the owner.

"When I need your help I won't ask for it, because I won't get it," said Fred curtly. "You know very well I didn't come into your dump for nothing, so there's no use trying to string you. The party I'm after isn't in yet, so I'll wait."

He flung himself into a chair and lit a cigar, utterly indifferent to the morose antagonism in the gang surrounding him, although he knew that every one of them would murder him if they thought they could get away with it.

Several of the gang showed the intense relief they felt upon learning that Robinson did not seem to want them.

"Can I treat you to anything?" asked the German insinuatingly.

"I don't want to get poisoned," retorted Fred, blowing a cloud of smoke at him. "Don't play any tricks either, for I've got a few men waiting for me to come out of here uninjured."

"Oh, we wouldn't do anything wrong," hastily protested the boss with an injured air. "Any cop is safe in my place."

Robinson grinned at him sardonically.

"You're an angel," he commented.

The detective kept his eye on the street door, watching the people who came and went for an hour, but Red Leary failed to appear. Then he got up and said to the saloonkeeper tersely:

"Unlock the back room!"

The man scowled and took a big heavy key from a nail on the wall.

"It's only a private game of poker," he began apologetically.

"I want to see if my party is among the players," explained Fred.

The man unlocked a rear door, and the officer stepped into a small cardroom filled with blinding smoke. Four notorious crooks sat around the table in the middle of the room, playing cards by the dull glow of a shaded drop light.

Robinson saw them stare around with startled glances, and a faint smile parted his lips as he shoved his gun toward one of them, and said in sharp tones:

"Come on, Leary!"

"Gosh! I'm pinched!" muttered the man, rising in a panic.

"Oh, so he's the one!" muttered the dive keeper.

"Chief wants to see you, Leary," said Fred decisively.

"What's the charge?" snarled the crook, hesitating.

"You'll find out at headquarters."

A suspicious gleam shot from the cornered man's eyes, and he stepped forward, the rest watching him silently with deep interest. As he reached the headquarters man, the German suddenly swung the key against Robinson's head, knocking him reeling. Before he recovered from the stunning effect the three crooks at the table plunged forward like bloodthirsty tigers, pounced on the officer, and tore the gun from his hand. The next instant he was slammed down on the floor, the whole ferocious gang piling on top of

him. He made a faint attempt to struggle, but they bound and gagged him, then arose panting and exhausted.

"Beat it, Leary!" he heard one of them advising the thief.

"You hang on to him for a few hours," Leary answered hurriedly.

"What has he got on you?"

"Just a suspicion. Besides, I nearly killed him, and he wants to get square. If I get a good start he'll never nail me again."

He rushed out the door, followed by the owner of the place, and the three remaining crooks seated themselves.

"You'll have to stay here a while, Robinson," said one of them in deadly tones. "You've got it on us now, and we expect you'll nail us when you get a chance, but we've got to help a pal who's in trouble, you know."

Fred could not reply, as the gag prevented all utterance, nor could he move, as they had him bound securely. It was his impression that they meant to take his life, but this anxiety was dispelled when the man added, after a slight pause:

"We don't intend to hurt you, if you behave."

Two hours passed by, the men occasionally conversing in whispers. All sounds had ceased like magic out in the barroom, from which the captive detective inferred that all the crooked habitués of the place, warned by the owner, had sought safety in flight.

It was now about four o'clock in the afternoon, and the gang guarding Robinson seemed satisfied that Leary had leeway enough, for the one who had spoken before now said:

"We are going to leave you, Robinson."

They filed out of the room, leaving the door open, and Fred saw them pass through the now deserted saloon into the street.

The moment they were gone he rolled himself over and over on the floor until he got out into the barroom. There wasn't a soul in the place, but the street door suddenly opened and a notorious dealer in opium stepped in. He cast a surprised glance around the empty room, and his eyes suddenly rested upon the detective, whom he studied intently. He seemed to recognize Fred, and realizing that there had been trouble in the place, he wheeled around and sped out into the street, leaving the door open.

The detective worked his body over to the door. It was very difficult to get up the steps, but when he reached the sidewalk a laborer came along, who saw his plight and released him.

Robinson was furious. That Leary had slipped through his fingers he now felt confident.

"Well, I've certainly botched this job," he reflected bitterly. "What a consummate fool I was to let them take me unawares."

Sure that Leary would shun the saloon in future, and wondering where he had gone so hurriedly, the detective jumped on a subway train, rode uptown, and went to the theatre where Daisy Dean was employed. The most certain way to locate a crook is to watch his girl, Robinson figured.

Secreted in a taxicab, he lurked near the stage door until the matinee was over. When the performers trooped out he soon caught sight of Miss Dean and her maid. The car they entered was trailed by Robinson's taxi to several department stores where the actress made some purchases, after which she was driven home. When she disappeared inside the house the detective noticed that all the shades were drawn down.

"I'll pay her an unexpected call via the roof," he reflected grimly, "and if she has Leary hidden in there I'll take him by surprise."

He rang Garson's bell, and Lena answered the summons.

"Oh, it's you back again, eh?" she asked, letting him into the hall.

"Did you see a man go into the house next-door this afternoon?" asked Fred.

"I sat by the front window most of the day," answered Lena, "but not a person went in there except the letter carrier and the actress with her maid."

"Well, she may have the crook I'm after hidden in her rooms," said the detective. "I suspect him of knowing something about the way your boss was killed, and intend to arrest him."

"O-o-o-o!" gasped the Swedish girl in surprise.

"You stay down here, and I'll go up over the roof."

"Look out he don't throw you off again, Mr. Robinson."

"No danger, Lena," smiled the detective. "He's a hard customer to handle, but I'm not afraid of him, and don't intend to quit trailing that guy until I land him in the jug."

He went upstairs as he spoke.. The house was very gloomy and quiet. But when he reached the bedroom floor he heard a soft footfall. The detective was on the alert instantly. He suddenly glided through the door into Garson's bedroom, where he crouched and listened. There was some one in the hall coming toward the rear, and Fred darted behind a portiere and cautiously peered out at the open doorway. The sound of stealthy footsteps in the hall drew nearer every moment. Then he suddenly caught sight of a dim figure in the gloom of the hall passing Garson's bedroom door. It was like a vague shadow. The detective strained his eyesight, but the flitting figure passed the opening and vanished like a ghost.

"Who the deuce was that?" wondered the detective. "It couldn't be Lena, for I left her downstairs. If she had any one in the house with her she would surely have told me."

At that moment he heard a door creaking on its rusty hinges, then a sound as of wood-splitting.

The detective's curiosity was aroused, and he crept softly to the hall door and cautiously peered around the frame. He caught a view of the storeroom door standing wide open. In the

room where Mr. Garson had been killed he saw a man down on his knees in the middle of the little empty room, prying up the floor boards with a chisel. He had an electric flashlight by which to see what he was doing, and as the glow was reflected upon his face the detective saw that it was Red Leary.

"The skunk has been next-door, just as I suspected, and got in here over the roofs," thought Robinson. "Now what in thunder is he up to?"

He felt in his hip pocket for his revolver, but to his dismay he recalled to mind that the crooks in the German's dive had taken the weapon away from him. It placed him at a great disadvantage to be unarmed just then, for he knew Red Leary was a desperate man and would not hesitate to kill him the moment he tackled the crook.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE persistence of the crook in trying to get into Garson's house coupled with the letter he had written to the lawyer gave the detective a vague suspicion of what was happening.

He saw Leary thrust his arm down in the hole in the floor and pull out a small square package, which he eagerly ripped open, disclosing a number of bonds.

"Manley's missing securities!" thought Fred. "That crook knew where the lawyer hid them, and got in here to gain possession of them. If he don't manage to get away with them, Daisy Dean will get her inheritance, after all!"

Wondering how Leary knew where the securities were hidden, he keenly watched the crook stuffing the bonds into his pocket. There was a grin of triumph on Red Leary's face as he rose to his feet. But just then the detective stepped into view.

"Up with your hands, Leary!" he exclaimed.

"Good God! It's Robinson!" burst from the startled crook's lips.

He flung up his hands, never dreaming that the officer would dare to attack him without a weapon of any kind, but as he did so he let the flashlight drop to the floor, and darkness suddenly fell upon the little room.

The detective rushed forward, his hand outstretched, and his fingers came in contact with the cold barrel of a gun Leary had drawn. Fred's hand closed on the weapon, and he gave it a powerful jerk, pulling it from the crook's fingers. The next instant there came a violent impact as Leary lurched forward, bumping him over against the wall.

Like a flash Leary leaped into the hall and ran swiftly to the scuttle ladder, up which he climbed with incredible speed. Fred was after him an instant afterward.

By the time the detective reached the open scuttle, Leary was over the dividing wall and rushing across the roof of the house next-door. The crook did not wait to descend the scuttle, but made a desperate leap at the glass skylight, as he expected the pursuing detective to open fire at him any moment. There was a violent crash, the jingle of broken glass, and down plunged the man in the inside of the broken frame.

Robinson swore softly, but went sliding down the ladder. He reached the bottom almost as soon as the fugitive, and darted out in the hall, where a mass of debris from the broken skylight littered the floor. The door of the bathroom banged shut. Fred rushed forward as a bolt shot in place. Then there sounded a sharp cry behind him and, wheeling around, he confronted Daisy Dean, who had just come up the stairs, startled by the noise.

"Mr. Robinson!" she exclaimed. "What is the meaning of this?"

"I'm after Red Leary. He's locked in the bathroom," replied Fred.

He rushed at the door, struck it with his shoulder, and burst the frail bolt holding it closed. The electric light was turned on, and he saw Leary just in the act of swinging himself out the window on the leader pipe coming down from the roof.

"Stop, or I'll shoot, Leary!" roared the detective, aiming the revolver, and the crook gave him a frightened look.

He was too excited to obey, and let his body swing out. But the leader was old and rusty, collapsed in his hands, and with a horrible yell the crook fell.

Down he plunged toward the yard, and Robinson heard a sickening thud as the man's body struck the ground.

A cry of intense horror burst from the actress, and she ran to the window and glared downward through the darkness. Below she could dimly see a huddled mass of humanity.

"Well?" said the detective, approaching her.

"I think he's dead!" she muttered.

"Wait here. I'll go down and see."

He hastened to the yard, and found Leary faintly breathing. It looked as if every bone in his body was broken.

The detective took the bonds away from him, and returning to the house, he phoned a hurry call to the hospital for an ambulance. When he joined the actress in the bathroom, she was as pale as death, and bent a mute, questioning glance upon him.

"He's alive, but I don't think he will get over it," said Fred.

"It's an awful thing to say," she muttered, "but I hope he won't."

Robinson was just going to ask what she meant, when he was startled to hear the voice of Lena, the Garson servant, calling:

"Mr. Robinson! Mr. Robinson!"

The officer thought she was in the room with him, as her voice was clear and distinct; but when he peered around he failed to see any sign of her.

"Hello, Lena!" he called. "Where are you?"

"In the storeroom!" answered the girl. "I'm scared. Was that you who gave that terrible cry?"

"No, no," he answered.

"Where are you?"

"In Miss Dean's bathroom. Next-door."

"Oh! Now I see you. I'm at the gas fixture. There's an open pipe through the wall right under it."

Robinson was startled. He quickly stepped over to the wall fixture, and now saw that there was an open pipe sticking into the bathroom from Garson's storeroom. The end of the pipe was flush with the wall and looked like part of the gas fixture.

The detective applied his eye to the pipe.

"Light a match, Lena!" he called to her excitedly.

As the girl obeyed, Fred distinctly saw the interior of the Garson storeroom, in the middle of which Lena stood holding a lit match.

"All right, Lena!" he sung out. "I'll be in there presently."

He turned to the actress, who stood silently watching him. Pointing at the open gas pipe, Robinson said:

"Miss Dean, that pipe explains the mystery of David Garson's death. The murderer was Red Leary. He stood in this room when the lawyer secreted the missing bonds under the floor of the adjoining storeroom, and probably saw Garson hide them there. Then he must have sent Garson a letter saying he suspected the lawyer was going to steal the bonds entrusted to him by your grandfather. He demanded a division of the bonds, and threatened to kill the lawyer if Garson tried to double-cross him. He boasted that he had found a way to keep Garson under observation day and night, and must have referred to this gas pipe."

The actress nodded silently, a look of deep distress on her pretty face.

"When Garson failed to meet Leary's demands," the officer went on, "it is evident that Leary got him to go into the storeroom—probably by calling to him through the open gas pipe, and when his victim was in range, the crook fired through the pipe and killed him. Now then, Miss Dean, are you implicated in this crime?"

"No! No!" gasped the girl in horror.

"What relation was Leary to you?"

"My husband," she muttered desperately. "After I married him I learned that he was a crook, and left him on my wedding night. He recently found me, and threatened to expose me to the world as the wife of a criminal. I was ashamed and afraid of him, and permitted him to hide here whenever he felt inclined. It must have been while he was concealed in this house, during my absence, that he shot Mr. Garson."

"I believe you. Now, about that mysterious trip of yours on the night of the murder. Where did you go?"

"Leary sent for me. He met me in Union Square. I gave him some money and returned to the theatre."

"How did he happen to know Garson?"

"Before I married Leary, I told him Garson was my grandfather's lawyer. He afterward found out, no doubt, that Garson held my grandfather's fortune in trust, and very likely tried to put up a job with the lawyer to cheat me out of my inheritance."

"That seems likely, but I've defeated him, for he entered Garson's house to-night, found the bonds, and stole them. It was while I was pursuing him that he fell. I took the bonds away from him just now, and here they are."

He showed them to her.

"You have been very good to me," she muttered gratefully.

"And with reason," said Robinson. "I've taken a wonderful fancy to you. Now that your husband may die, perhaps——"

The girl darted a quick glance at him, and her cheeks flushed, but she made no reply, and Fred put the bonds in his pocket again.

"I'll have to turn these bonds over to the authorities," he explained, "but you can put in a claim, and in due time they will be given to you."

The arrival of the ambulance from the hospital interrupted them, and the body of the injured crook was taken away. The detective then parted with Daisy Dean and went down to headquarters.

Chief O'Brien was in his office, sitting at his desk, chewing on the butt of a strong black cigar.

"Hello, Fred," he rumbled. "What brings you here?"

"I've finished my job by solving the mystery of the Garson murder," replied the detective, dropping into a chair beside the other.

"Oh!" said O'Brien with interest. "Let's have the details."

Robinson spun his yarn and handed over the stolen bonds.

"I hope I've doped it out correctly," he remarked. "What's your opinion?"

"Of course you're right!" growled the chief. "All the evidence proves it. But, of course, a confession from Leary will clinch your hypothesis."

"I'll try to get one from him at the hospital to-morrow."

A few moments later Fred went home, tired out. It was raining next day, but after a hasty breakfast he hurried over to Bellevue and made his way to the men's ward.

A policeman was standing beside Red Leary's cot, and he saluted the detective, and said:

"I guess my job is done. Leary is dead."

Fred looked at the crook, and saw that there was no mistake about the matter. He felt disappointed. Had the crook confessed, his theory might have been confirmed.

"Was he conscious before he died?" he asked the policeman.

"No. He never got out of the stupor he was

in since they first brought him here. He died an hour ago."

Fred left the hospital thinking deeply. It was clear that some few points in the case would now have to remain a mystery, but he felt that enough was known and surmised to settle the fact that Red Leary had killed David Garson.

Making his way to the Central Office, he told O'Brien what had happened to the crook. The chief reflected a moment.

"Case is closed," he remarked abruptly. "You can lay off for a week, Fred, to get over the rough handling you got."

"Then I'll spend my vacation by putting Daisy Dean's case in the hands of a good lawyer, so she can get her inheritance."

A broad grin spread over O'Brien's red face, and he winked at the young detective significantly.

"Har, har, har!" he roared. "What a blind old bat I've been not to notice that you must have got stuck on that jane."

Robinson rose to his feet and smiled.

"There's nothing to prevent me from choosing her now," he remarked in satisfied tones, "and if I'm any judge of human nature, that girl rather likes me."

He left the office, and went to Daisy's house, where the maid ushered him into the parlor. In a short time the actress came in, and asked in anxious tones:

"How is Leary?"

"Dead," said Fred.

"Well," she remarked after a pause, "I am not sorry, as it will relieve me of a great deal of unwelcome notoriety had he lived and been brought to trial."

"It leaves you free to marry, if you choose to do so," added Robinson. "Has any man any claim on you?"

"One," she answered quietly.

"Oh," said Fred disappointedly. "Who?"

"Why—you," she smiled.

He looked straight into her eyes, then impulsively grasped both her hands in his own.

"May I hope?" he asked eagerly.

"I took a fancy to you from the first," she answered softly, "but I was in a trying position, hampered with a man I despised and feared. That's why I deceived you."

Fred caught her in his arms.

"Well, your troubles are over now," he exclaimed, "and you've made me the happiest man on earth!"

She wound her arms around his neck, and as he bent over, their lips met in a lingering kiss.

MAKING MATCHES

THE first Lucifer or friction matches date back to 1829. They were made and dipped by hand, and sold for a little over two dollars per hundred.

To-day the same quantity may be bought for a couple of cents, or even less. This cheapness is due to the fact that all matches are made and most of them are dipped by machinery.

In making matches by one process, a cylinder of pine wood the length of seven matches, which has been soaked in water to make it tough, is placed in a sort of lathe and as it revolves the circumference comes in contact with a sharp blade which cuts off a continuous shaving the thickness of a match. As this shaving comes away from the log it is cut into seven strips, each as wide as a match is long.

These ribbons are cut into lengths of about eight feet, and one hundred and twenty or so are piled on top of each other and fed into a cutting machine, which cuts as many splints at each stroke as there are ribbons in the pile.

Rapid as this process of making splints is, it has been displaced in America by another method in which very little hand work is required. In this case the raw material is received at the factory in the shape of a two-inch white pine plank. This is sawed into blocks the length of the match.

The blocks are then fastened by means of clamps to the bed of a machine and cutters groove out a set of splints from the surface. The cutters do not turn the entire surface into splints at one impact, but cuts them out one-fourth of an inch apart. The ridges left between the places from which the first set of splints was cut are then worked up, and so on until the whole block is consumed.

As soon as the splints are separated from the block they are seized in iron clamp plates, which form an endless chain. The endless chain carries the splints across a steam-heated drum, which warms them nearly to the temperature of the paraffin, into which they are next dipped.

From the paraffin bath the splints move on continuously to the rollers that carry the "heading mixture"—phosphorus, chlorate of potash, etc.—and, as the matches are carried past the rollers each one receives a red or blue head, as the case may be. From the rollers they continue on through a room swept by a blast of cold, dry air.

The matches move on until, just before they reach the starting point again, an automatic punch thrusts the matches out and places them side by side in a box, put in the right place at the right time by another endless belt.

It is estimated that the nations of the civilized world use, in round numbers, three million matches a minute.

A Newspaper Personal

By ALFRED WINTHROP.

SPECULATION as to who had murdered George Judson had long since died out. The murder had been the usual day's wonder when Judson had been found dead in a small private room of a hotel of questionable character.

To this room there were two entrances, one opening into a hall leading to the bar-room, the other into another hall and down a private stairway to the street. The street-door was seldom fastened.

Judson must have entered by this door and the murderer likewise, although no living soul had observed the latter enter or depart. At first suspicion's finger was directed toward the proprietor of the place, but as nothing could be proved against him, he was released.

The coroner's jury decided that "he came to his death at the hands of a person or persons unknown."

And this was absolutely all that was known, two years later, by which time the circumstances were well-nigh forgotten. But then, one day, in looking over the "Personals," Mike Kelly, the keenest detective at headquarters, saw one which it struck him concealed something, and which he read again and pondered over. He was the man who had handled the Judson case and failed.

"TOM—Where are you? I am in distress, and need money. If you don't answer this, I'll tell all I know about that J——n affair.

"KATE."

"That J——n affair! What affair was that? J——n! Can it be the Judson affair?" as the murder flashed suddenly across Mikes' brain. "Thunder! what a feather it would be in my cap if I could solve this enigma of who murdered Judson. J——n! I'll investigate this."

Kelly's connection with the case at the time of the crime had made him acquainted with the names of some of Judson's friends. He chanced to remember the name of one, whom he at once went to see. Mike found that he had been a warm friend of Judson's.

"Poor George!" he said. "Many a good time we had together. They called him just a little too wild—perhaps he was a trifle fast to suit the taste of a church-deacon—but he had a good heart, had Judson. So you're trying to solve the mystery, hey? Well, I'll help you all I can."

"Then tell me, did you and he ever know a woman called Grace?"

"Grace—Grace!" musingly. "No."

"Nor Kate?"

"Yes, I know of one who traveled by the name of Kate. Jud knew her well—used to meet her in the place where he was murdered."

"Can you dscribe her?"

"Yes. Medium sized, oval face, black hair and sparkling eyes like jet, and—and—I remember there was something peculiar about her mouth when she smiled. What was it? Ah! I remember; one of her front teeth had been filed away on one corner."

The next day Kelly inserted in the "Personals" the following:

"KATE—Meet me at the corner of Broadway and Fourth street, to-night, at ten."

"TOM."

Full of hope, Mike hung about the designated spot until long after the hour mentioned. But Kate did not appear, nor did she the next night or the one following; nor could Kelly get her to answer numerous "Personals" inserted from time to time. In the very teeth of a most auspicious beginning Kelly was sadly balked.

But he did not yet despair of success, although it was several months later before he again picked up a clue.

While examining the passenger list of a steamer, and asking questions about the passengers of her last trip for an entirely different purpose, the man described the very woman Kelly was after, this very Kate.

She was traveling with an elderly gentleman, who bought tickets for "Nicholas Turner and wife."

Slight as were these grounds for supposing that this was the woman who advertised in the "Personals," and not knowing for a certainty whether J——n meant Judson, Kelly determined to follow her up. Many of his professional brethren would have laughed at him for putting so much faith in the case; but he did not give them the chance to laugh, for he kept the whole thing to himself.

Judson had been very wealthy, and all his relations were rich also.

They had offered a handsome reward for the murderer being brought to justice.

"No, I'll keep it to myself," said Mike. "If I succeed I'll make a nice stake; if I fail none shall know it."

He took the next steamer for England, and thence followed "Nicholas Turner and wife" to Paris. Here for a time he was at fault, for they had changed the name they sailed under to "N. T. Howell and wife." But he caught a clue at last and finally tracked them to Italy—to Rome.

For many days the officer paced the streets, hoping to get a glimpse of his birds, but as time passed on without meeting them he began to feel discouraged. Finally he determined to do what he should have done in the first place, and went to the office of the police.

Mike stated the case, and asked their advice toward discovering if they still remained in Rome.

"Better consult Zanfretta," he was finally told.

"Who is he?"

"A beggar, but just the man you want."

"Where does he live?"

Kelly received minute directions, and about three o'clock that afternoon found himself in one of the dirtiest and filthiest holes he had ever seen. It was a large, massive building, but the rooms were very small and very dirty.

In one of them he found Zanfretta.

Kelly told him who had sent him.

"And what is it you want?" he asked. The purity and excellence of the English he spoke surprised Mike. But he afterward learned that this old beggar had business frequently with detectives, and much intercourse with English-speaking people had given him command of that language.

Kelly described Kate.

"She's in Rome," he said quietly, and yet positively.

"Are you sure?"

"These eyes never deceived me yet—they were blessed by St. Benedict," he said, piously, making the sign of the cross.

"But," Mike said, "is it possible you could see this woman and remember her so thoroughly without having had any reason to be interested in her?"

Zanfretta smiled.

"I have long made it my business to note the face of every stranger in Rome."

"Can you tell me anything more of her? Where she lives and how?"

A shrewd look crossed the beggar's face.

"It is usual at this stage of the business to say how much my services are worth," he said, pointedly.

"How much do you want?"

"Say twenty dollars."

"I'll make it twenty-five if you work up the case within three days."

"Done," he said. "Ritta and myself will do it for you," and he patted affectionately the head of a little girl, whom, up to this time, the detective had barely noticed.

"Does she assist you?"

"Yes, she is a treasure to the old beggar," he said. "Come in three days from now, and you shall learn what you wish to know."

Taking the hint, Mike bade him good-day, took his departure, and went to his hotel, where he set about making himself comfortable for the next three days.

"Don't they make a handsome couple?"

The remark drew Mike's attention to two guests of the hotel. The gentleman was tall, well-built and handsome; his face was finely molded, and a heavy mustache drooped over his mouth. The lady was fairer complexioned than he was, and well merited the adjective—"beautiful."

It was said that, providing the consent of the Hon. Ezra Church could be obtained, Thomas Corsa and Lucy Church would be married. With a cigar between his lips, and the blue smoke curling spirally upward on the soft air, Mike allowed his footsteps to fall in their wake.

Accident alone had shaped his course, for he had no desire to watch them.

Glancing ahead, he saw the form of a beggar before the door of one of the magnificent churches of the Eternal City. Standing beside him was a child—a little girl.

"Zanfretta!" Mike thought, and was about to turn his eyes from him when he saw his head raised, saw the little girl bend her eyes keenly on some one approaching from the opposite direction. It was a woman, and alone.

It was Kate, and Mike shrank back out of sight, but in such a position as to witness what transpired. Zanfretta was supposed to be blind, but he had eyes keener than Mike's, in truth; and Mike saw that he was watching the woman, now almost beside him.

Tom Corsa and Lucy were also near him; he was bending toward Lucy, speaking tender words of love, when Mike saw him suddenly raise his head. The dark complexioned woman had uttered an exclamation of surprise.

Corsa started, his fist clenched, his face paled; the dark woman darted at him a meaning look; the child watched the trio intently, and Kelly saw the beggar detective's eyes bestow a keen, transitory look on them, and then his head sank again, and to all appearances he was the humble supplicant for alms.

Corsa hurried Lucy past the woman whose presence had disturbed him, and on whom he bestowed neither word nor look of recognition. The dark woman entered the church.

Kelly glided forward now, and would have followed the latter, but that the eyes of the beggar detective were lifted, and that he made a significant gesture not to do so. So Mike sauntered on.

Nothing further of any importance happened until the expiration of the three days, when Kelly visited Zanfretta.

"The money!" he said, in answer, when Mike asked him what he had learned; nor would he open his lips until he had it in his hands. Then he was communicative enough.

"The woman's name is Kate Smith. She came to Rome with a man named Nicholas Turner Howell. He got tired of her and deserted her a week ago. She is from New York originally. She is well acquainted with the man who, it is said, will marry Lucy Church. Kate sent a note to his

hotel and he went to see her. She holds some power over him, or he would never have faced the public in her company. They have been out driving together the past two days. Kate's character is well known, and Miss Church is almost heartbroken, for her father forbids her speaking again to this Corsa."

"And how have you learned all this?" Kelly asked in surprise, for he was astonished at his having so soon informed himself about so many minor details.

Again he saw that peculiar, shrewd smile cross the beggar's face. "Excuse me," he said, "but that is the secret of my business."

"True. But now where does this Kate live?"

He told him, and thither Mike at once posted, after arming himself with the proper authority of the law. Making his way to her room, he arrested her.

"What for?" she demanded.

"For being concerned in the murder of George Judson," Kelly sternly said. "Your accomplice is also in custody."

Her face became blanched and bloodless. Mike saw that she was frightened.

"My God! what shall I do?" she cried, sinking down in abject terror.

"I'll tell you," quickly said the detective. "Make a clean breast of it, for he is seeking to save himself by laying it all on you."

Mike saw her eyes flash.

"The coward!" she snapped. "Tries to save himself by sacrificing me, does he? But you have not accepted him yet as States evidence?"

"No, I have reserved the chance for you," Kelly answered shrewdly. "Now out with it. Tell the truth."

"I will," she said solemnly. "This is how it happened: You know I am not a good woman. Well, Jud—poor Jud—fell in love with me. He had lots of coin and supported me royally. But I was not true to him, for I loved this Tom Corsa.

"I used to meet Jud in the place where he was murdered. I went there that night an hour earlier than the appointed time to meet Corsa. Jud had never done so before, but that night he came earlier than the appointed time. He found Corsa there. He and Corsa had been bosom friends, and he called Corsa a treacherous thief and a traitor. Jud was angry, and perhaps a little jealous. Corsa was hot-blooded.

"Very few words passed. It all happened quick as a flash, and there lay Jud dead. Corsa and I left the place unseen. Corsa gave me money and sent me West, promising to come after me in a week or so. But he never did. Perhaps the love he professed to bear me was turned into horror when he reflected that I had been the innocent cause of his staining his hand with his friend's blood.

"I never saw Corsa again until I met him here a couple of days ago. And that is the truth, so help me God!"

"You advertised for Corsa in the 'Personals'?" Kelly said.

"Yes. And you saw it then?"

"Yes. Why did you not reply to the answer signed 'Tim'?"

"When I advertised for Tom Corsa I was in distress, hadn't a cent in the world. But that day I met Howell, whom I had made acquaintance with out West. He relieved my necessities, and I never looked for an answer, but got ready and came to Europe with him."

It is scarcely necessary to say that Kelly put her confession into legal shape, which enabled him to get a warrant for Tom Corsa. They were both brought back to New York and sentenced to life terms in Sing Sing.

And thus, by the simple circumstance of seeing J——n in the "Personals" was solved a case which had been wrapped in the profoundest mystery.

It is said that "murder will out," and it is a saying which shows new illustrations of its truth nearly every day.

WOMAN SWINDLED OUT OF GHOST

MRS. GABBY thinks she has been swindled, and she is a very much aggrieved young woman. It all came about over the purchase of a country home in Connecticut. From now on Mrs. Gabby won't believe a thing any dealer in real estate tells her. Seeking a place for the summer, Mrs. Gabby ran across a perfectly delightful little place within a couple of hours of the city. It was vacant, too, and all ready to move into.

But there was one drawback, and she soon heard it from everybody in the neighborhood—that is, everybody except the agent who wanted to sell the property, and even he admitted it after she had heard the story. The house was haunted.

"Oh, isn't that delightful?" Mrs. Gabby exclaimed. "I've never seen a ghost in my life."

Having seen about everything else in the world and always anxious for a new sensation Mrs. Gabby bought the house and moved in at once. But apparently Mr. Ghost had moved out.

"I never was so disappointed in anything in my life," Mrs. Gabby declared, with tears in her eyes. "They told me that the former owner, who had been murdered, walked about the place every night with his head in his hands. I lay awake night after night for a week and he never came once. It's a swindle, and I believe that agent started the story just so I would buy the old house."

A $10,000 Kiss

By KATHERINE STAGG

CHAPTER ONE

"SAY, Tom, do you remember when we were playing in St. Louis some years ago that we used to take out the water pitcher after the show and get it filled with real beer?"

"Stop, man, you break my heart!"

"Yeh! 'en it wasn't the dinky ice-water pitcher, either, but a whale of a big one that went with the wash bowl. 'En they used to fill it for a quarter!"

Detective Johnny Lewis had been an actor, and he knew the dramatic value of an eloquent pause.

"Wasn't that the season we were with the Clara Holland company?"

"Yeh! And I was the bright young juvenile lead," 'en they paid me ten a week extra for a whole month in Buffalo where we stayed to rehearse a new piece, ten a week extra if I put on my dress clothes every night, and stood around the hotel for the natives to gaze at my beauty. Funny old times!"

Tom Weldon grinned with appreciation of the memory. The two men shared a small flat in the West End walkups on the upper West side of Manhattan, and, although both had quit the stage, they loved nothing better than to reminisce of an evening when pipes were lighted, and nothing of importance claimed their time. Since the famous Eighteenth Amendment was enacted the favorite indoor sport of our country has become one of reminiscence, if you get what I mean. Many, who are fortunate enough to have the price, "get it"; a few "make it"; but the vast majority merely gloat in memory, mourn a little and then go their way with that smiling philosophy characteristic of our American temperament.

Tom Weldon had gone into the writing end of the show game, and coolly killed his people by the hundred, to assuage the reckless movie thirst. Johnny Lewis had joined the private detective firm of Hyde & Cleary, where his active mind and quick judgment had already made an enviable record. It was nine o'clock of a hot evening, and their small world seemed as placid as a mill pond when a prolonged ring at their door bell and a hurried knocking broke in on their calm—both ringing and knocking being of such an insistent kind that they knew at once it could be no ordinary visitor.

"Gosh, now what? Want to use our phone, I'll bet; the landlord's baby's got the croup, or the Henna Widow has lost her priceless Woolworth pearls."

"Well, go to it; makes a man mighty popular to have the only phone in the house."

But it wasn't exactly either of these; as Johnny opened the door a cunning little girl of seven or eight stood there.

The ruffles on her dainty frock and her black bobbed hair were both shaking with the violence of her exertions, and her black eyes were as big as the proverbial saucers.

"Oh, come quick," she babbled. "All our money is stole, and my mamma is fainted; please hurry."

She was not wholly a stranger to the young men, for they had frequently seen her running up and down the stairs, and knew she was the property and supposedly the offspring of the lady they had dubbed "the Henna Widow."

They exchanged a quick look, a mental question shot from one to the other, and was answered, for long association had made them experts in telepathy as practised in everyday usage. Due credit to the scientists with their heavy experimentation, but we all use telepathy every day of our lives, and most of us don't even know it by its name.

Johnny gave an imperceptible wink and hurried toward the door, remarking:

"Come on, old man, to the rescue of beauty."

Tom got the thought instantly that they should both go, for it might be a plant of some kind. You know, funny things happen nowadays, and moral safety means more than physical at times.

As they rushed the first pair of stairs, a perfect volley of shrieks came from the top floor.

Johnny paused, and looked at the child.

"Mother don't sound faint."

"But that isn't mother," replied the child, "we live here, and that is the landlord's flat up there," pointing with a tiny trembling finger.

"But something seems the matter up there, too."

"Oh, please," the little girl pleaded, "don't bother with them; there are such a lot of them, and they always make such a noise."

"But look here, infant, landlords are very important people nowadays, and that noise sounds like more than just what we might call social intercourse."

"I don't understand those words, but there's a lot of them to take care of their rooms, and there's just one of mother."

"Sound argument, kid; you win. Lead us to mother."

But before they could go any further a whole avalanche of Italian kids came pouring down from the upper story, with Tony Florio in their midst.

Tony, fat and flushed at normal, was now in

danger of heart failure or bursting a blood vessel from the exurberance of his cries and gesticulations.

"Thebes, thebes!" he shrieked. "My rentas; my rentas!"

Understanding this was a complaint, and not a classical allusion the two men from the flat below began to realize that something had really happened in the usually quiet apartments.

Johnny made a sign to Tom, and whispered:

"You lead the mob back upstairs, if you can; I'll take Tony in here, and find out if the burglar, if there is one, has been playing a double shuffle."

Tom understood what Johnny wanted, and herded the Italian family back to the upper regions, not stopping at their own flat, but going on to the roof, for it being the top floor, it occurred to him at once to waste no time, but find out if any one was skulking about up there, or at least to take a look and see how one might make a getaway from that region.

In the meantime Johnny had gotten some little idea of the redoubtable Tony's loss, which rather staggered him, for it did not seem the neighborhood where one would expect to find several thousands in cash, even if it was after banking hours. An excuse of a broken auto with minor accidents was gurgled out by Tony, to explain his delay in banking the said sum.

He was so vociferous, and the money named so serious, that for a moment the lady known as the Henna Widow had been neglected—but not for long; the little girl once more put in her plea:

"Oh, please, come in here to mother, Mr. Florio ain't fainted."

"Right you are, infant; I don't believe he could if he tried. Look here, man, this youngster says her mother has been robbed, too; come along in here and let's get at the bottom of this thing."

They found a flat, simply but exquisitely furnished, pictures and books betokening the good taste of the occupant.

Huddled on the floor was a limp figure clad in a blue kimono and blue satin slippers.

Johnny murmured to himself:

"Dressed for the part."

Before he could search for restoratives the woman sat up and looked from one to the other in a dazed fashion.

"Oh, Mr. Florio, did Ide call you? I've been robbed; I've been robbed!"

This was an appropriate cue for another explosion on the part of the excitable Italian. This tornado of sound, had it been musical, could have put him in the Grand Opera class. But as it was it only succeeded in completely overpowering the story of the pretty woman. Johnny observed that she was very pretty.

Florio choked out something about ten thousand, while she modestly cried over her "two hundred or so," she wasn't quite sure just how much, as she was very poor at figures, she said.

Johnny looked keenly at each in turn, then sat down, sans ceremony, lit a cigarette, and murmured to himself, a bad habit of his:

"Good at her own figure, anyhow."

"Yes, somewhere about two hundred, but it is almost all I——" She caught herself up as if she had said more than she intended.

"Any jewels?" asked Johnny laconically.

"I have no jewels now," she answered sadly.

"Why, mother, you have so." This from the child, who had been hovering, big-eyed, on the outskirts of the group.

"Hush, Ide! The dear child thinks a few beads I wear are jewels; naturally she does not know, at her age."

"I thought girls knew that in the cradle, nowadays."

A rather sharp glance greeted this flippant remark, but the lady only sighed profoundly and sank gracefully into a chair.

"Well," continued Johnny, "I suppose the first thing is to phone for the police."

"No, no, no! Da polica no good; they only looka, looka, and talka, talka, 'en maybe maka more troub'."

"Sorry, Mr. Florio, you have such a poor opinion of our eminent force. But just what do you propose to do, if not call the police?" asked Johnny in some puzzlement.

"You a detecta, no?" answered Tony, with a wary glance and a sibilant indrawn breath.

"Yes, Hyde & Creary, at your service."

"You taka da case; you finda da mon'; I pay good."

"But the lady, she has been robbed, too, and perhaps she feels differently about the police; how about it, Mrs. ——?"

"Helen Van Tine is my name," she murmured slowly, evidently considering carefully just how she would answer the rest of his question.

"Ah, Mrs. Van Tine, think it over a moment; of course it must be reported, but I could arrange that the search would be left in my hands; in the meantime, please tell me as briefly as possible just where your money was when it happened, and the circumstances of your discovering your loss."

Here Florio started another geyser of words, but Johnny quieted him with a surprisingly stern look, waved a command, and said:

"The lady first. By the way, Mrs. Van Tine, how long have you lived in this apartment?"

"Only three months," she replied. "I know I ought not to have lived alone here, but maids are so expensive nowadays, and I thought, just for my child and myself——" She paused.

"Yes, yes, we understand about that; but come, now for the story of your loss: First, when did you notice it?"

"Why, it might have happened any time today; I never keep much money in the house, but I am going out of town for a couple of days, and had drawn two hundred and fifty dollars yesterday; this morning I took the amount of my rent

out of the envelope in my desk over there," pointing to a dainty mahogany piece in the corner of the room, " then I put the rest back, and I have not touched it since until just a few minutes ago. I went to look for it, thinking I would fix up the electric light bill before I go, and mail it in the morning; then I found that it was gone."

"Desk locked?"

"No, I suppose I am careless, but I never thought of such a thing happening."

"Have you paid the rent you mentioned?"

"Sure she did; she pay always da first one ina da house. Mrs. Vana besta tenant," and Tony smiled fatuously, in a way that showed he appreciated the pulchritude of the lady at no small value. She did look marvelously pretty and appealing as she turned from one to the other of the two men.

"One question more, Mrs. Van Tine, then we will have the tale of our mutual landlord. Just a moment, Florio; did you pay the rent to him here, in this room?"

But Mrs. Van Tine seemed to be overcome again by the sense of her position and loss, for she threw out a white hand, as if for support, and overturned a large vase, breaking it in the usual thousand fragments. This created a diversion for her hand was seriously cut by clutching a piece of the Bohemian glass of which it had been a beautiful example. No fake about the glass either, Johnny noticed, for he was a judge of many curious things, and loved beautiful objects for their own sake rather than their value.

After the hand had been washed, iodine applied, and bound up, he turned his attention to Tony Florio, who, while much concerned to see the damage done to the lovely hand, yet was growing impatient to get at his own side of the burglary.

"Now, then, Mr. Florio, how did you come to have such a plutocratic sum of money in the house this time of night?" asked Johnny.

"I collecta da rentas in da morn, many rentas. I had not time to go to bank, for I had to go to da country to meet some peop' on a deal. I meant to geta back in time for da bank, but my auto broka down, and I was late; so I puta da mon' in my coata pock, and keepa him ona me. It got hot after I hada my sup, and I puta my coat on da chair. I not go outa da room, but when I feel for a match for my cigarro, my coata feel so light I getta da fit. I looka, looka, da mon' gone! Sacre gosh darna!"

This moving recital was listened to with intense interest by both of his hearers.

Johnny kept a waiting silence for a moment, until the pause began to grow awkward. Mrs. Van Tine fidgeted with the bandage on her hand, then said:

"Might it not have fallen on the floor somewhere? Why not make a thorough search? I have often lost things and found them again. In fact, I looked for a hour before I gave up hope of finding my small roll of bills, although they mean so much to me in my straitened circumstances," and she paused pathetically.

CHAPTER TWO

"YOU searched for an hour? Then fainted? But I suppose that was natural when you realized that a burglar had really been inside your home, and you at his mercy, all unconscious."

These remarks seemed so futile that it looked very much as if Johnny was sparring for time.

He lit another cigarette, with a nod to Mrs. Van Tine, then continued:

"Will you slip on a coat or something and go upstairs with us? I don't think it best for you to stay here alone; the thief might be hiding somewhere."

"Oh, my goodness!"—a little shriek of well-done alarm—"but really, I hadn't thought of that. I wonder if I would not better dress and go to a friend's home for the night; my nerves are all unstrung; I have a friend who is almost a sister to me, and I shall be quite safe with her."

"That will probably be the best plan, but before you go please give me the address, so we can communicate with you if we discover anything."

"Surely; I shall get ready at once, then Ide can run up and hand you the card before we go. I do hope you will find your money, dear Mr. Florio; and I do think it was kind for Mr. Lewis to fix it so we did not have to undergo all the wretched bother of the police." With this she bowed them out.

Once outside the door Johnny Lewis became a different man. With a leap he dragged the astonished Florio down the stairs to his own flat, taking them five steps at a time, stopped at the door only long enough to give a peculiar whistle, a relic of his schoolboy days, but a signal that Tom Weldon knew to be the S. O. S. call, without question or delay.

He did not turn on the lights, but whispered over the phone a cryptic message, while holding Florio by the coat collar lest he got away, and almost choking him for fear he would break out again in his usual volcanic fits of overpowering eloquence.

This done, he released his hold partially, still keeping his voice in a low key, lest the words might float upward, as the hot night necessitating open windows.

"Say, Florio, own up now, half of that ten thousand was bootlegging money, wasn't it?"

Florio sputtered some unintelligible words, like all his class, taking refuge in pretended ignorance of English as soon as he was thoroughly frightened.

"Well, never mind, if I get you back your

money, will you deliver me two cases F. O. B. besides my regular charge?"

Florio vehemently protested he would do anything if he only got his money back.

"Well, I think it is a good sporting chance," grinned Johnny in the dark, beginning to thoroughly enjoy himself.

"But when, but when do I geta da mon'?" wailed Florio.

"You old lady killer, how long does it take a woman to dress, when the occasion is fairly important?"

"Oh, Mr. Lewis, you kida me; and I am in so much troub'."

Johnny had kept one hand on the phone. A few sibilant words reached his attentive ear, then he hung up, and spoke more seriously to the thoroughly puzzled Italian.

"Tony, listen to me, and do exactly what I say. You go straight up to your flat now, and make all the noise you want to on the way up. Talk to yourself all the way; rampage about in your rooms as if you were hunting for your money. Throw over a few chairs; you are the landlord, and no one dares to complain; then, when I ring your bell, the downstairs one, I mean—I'll ring it five times, remember, five times—you come on down. If Johnny Lewis knows his business, he'll have a nice little square package to hand you that will look like flowers from Italy to your enraptured sight. Now go, and don't forget to make a noise! I'll bet you never had to be told that before."

Thoroughly bewildered, but hypnotized into obedience, Florio started off, passing Tom Weldon in the dark hallway without seeing him at all.

"For God's sake, what's up, Johnny?" Tom breathed softly.

"Hush! you'll know in about seven minutes."

Followed a tense silence. Johnny grinned in the dark as he heard Florio on the upper floor, assisted by his wonderful and bountiful family, making noise enough to raise the dead.

He grabbed Tom's hand, then edged to the door leading into the outside hall; this he kept shut, but not latched, and when light footsteps came pattering down the stairs, even his cool nerve felt the suspense. Tom had a fine electric tingle that warned him the grand-stand play was about to be made, although he was literally in the dark as to what it all meant.

A slender cloaked figure was about to pass the door, when he made one spring, another whistle sounded, two burly forms sprang as if by magic from the street outside, the light went up, and disclosed Mrs. Van Tine and the child.

Johnny spoke quietly.

"Bella, it is no use; very, very clever; the boldness of it almost put it over, but I knew you in spite of the fact that you were in peroxide the last time I saw you; of course henna does make a great difference. Really more becoming, I think. I say, Tom, would you mind taking this interesting infant around to Mrs. Clary for to-night? Poor youngster, we must find out where she belongs, if anywhere, but it's pretty bad business for her from any standpoint."

"What does all this mean? What in the world are you talking about?" half sneered the woman, while she was trembling visibly. She knew her game was up, and that she was surrounded by too many to make a break for liberty.

Johnny marshalled them all back into his own flat, after giving the ring he had promised old Florio.

The woman, Bella, was wearing one of those quilted wraps, and it was only a moment's work to peel Florio's rolls of bills from the quilting where it had been cunningly sewed into the thick part of the lining, and could have even been handled without discovery, unless suspicion had pointed the way.

A few moment's grilling, and Bella concluded the best way was to make a clean breast of it. Then she told how when she went up to pay her rent she had easily stolen the wallet which Florio had carried the money in while the old philanderer had exacted a kiss with her rent receipt.

Johnny's parting shot to Florio was the old-time advice of Mr. Pickwick:

"Hey, old sport, beware of Vidders."

CHILD PREDICTS OWN DEATH

A CHILD'S strange prediction of her own death became known at Syracuse, N. Y., June 3. Margaret Marie Mors, twelve-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Mors, of No. 117 Bronner avenue, on the day she predicted three days in advance, died Wednesday night at St. Joseph's Hospital.

Stricken with a severe heart attack, due to inflammatory rheumatism, while watching a ball game on Memorial Day, the girl became delirious during the day and repeated the words:

"Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, I'll die that day."

Monday night her condition grew worse and she was taken to the hospital. Tuesday afternoon, with her mother watching beside her, the girl suddenly said:

"Grandpa is calling me."

It was the birthday of her material grandfather, who died three years ago. All day Wednesday the child's parents watched fearfully at her bedside, gravely recalling the prediction of death. They were strangely affected by their daughter's manner, but hoped it was only childish fancy.

Forty minutes before the end of Wednesday, at 11:20 p.m., Margaret died.

Driven To Despair

By RICHARD R. HARVEY.

I have frequently found, in the course of my professional experience, that even the most barbarous crimes are often less the result of natural depravity than the force of circumstances working upon a nature in which the affections are strong, blt the moral power weak.

Such cases are often more deserving of a feeling of pity than of repugnance.

A telegram was received at the headquarters where I was stationed, requesting the immediate presence of an efficient detective.

The case was murder, and being detailed for the duty, I lost no time in proceeding to the scene of the tragedy.

Arriving there, I found the whole cummunity in a state of the wildest excitement.

The murdered person was an old lady, wealthy and somewhat eccentric, who occupied a house in an isolated position on the outskirts of the town.

She had been found murdered in her bed.

I soon learned that the household consisted of the lady's maid, three other women servants, and a chauffeur.

They had been in the lady's service for many years, with the exception of the maid, who had arrived about nine months previously. I felt convinced that the deed was the work of a woman —of a jealous woman, for no one but a woman would so have repeated the number of wounds, any one of which would have been fatal. That robbery had not been the object was evident, as only one article, a valuable diamond ring, was missing. That the murderess must have been possessed of keys both to the front door and that of the lady's sleeping apartment was also plain, as they had been locked when the crime was discovered. This would have led to the conclusion that it was committed by some inmate of the house, had it not been for another circumstance. Around the handle of the door was the mark of a red hand, which showed that after the crime the perpetrator had left the house. The most probable person for suspicion to fall upon was the maid; and keeping a close watch upon her, I was rewarded when, about the middle of the afternoon, I saw her make her way cautiously towards a little thicket at the bottom of the garden.

Following her footsteps, I crept up behind her unseen, and saw she was busily engaged in scraping a hole in the ground beneath the root of a tree. Then she drew something from her breast, and was about to place it in the hole she had dug, when I sprang from my place of concealment and caught her by the wrist. She gave a wild cry of terror, and then fainted. Opening her hand, I looked at what it contained. It was the dead woman's diamond ring.

I waited until she revived. Then she acknowledged having stolen the ring the previous evening, but most earnestly protested her innocence of the darker crime. There was a sincerity about the girl's confession, as she narrated every incident of the act, that carried conviction with it. Suddenly a stray word gave me a new idea.

"I thought I could say it was lost, and maybe my mistress would blame her niece for taking it," the girl said.

"Her niece?" I asked. "I thought she lived alone?"

"So she did," the girl explained; "but she came to the house yesterday afternoon, and mistress and she had a quarrel which I overheard."

Little by little I gained the whole story. The murdered woman's niece, who was her only living relative, was the wife of a sporting man, who had got into trouble by passing counterfeit notes, and unless he had a certain sum by two days following, the holder of the notes would have him prosecuted. It was for the purpose of getting her to advance the money that her niece had called upon the old lady, and upon her refusal had gone on her knees to her in vain. Then she had risen and left the house, with a parting threat that whatever might happen, her aunt had brought it on her own head.

This story placed the whole case in a new aspect. The niece evidently loved her husband, and that fact would still support my idea that it was the act of a woman, frantic either with jealousy or the thought of danger to one she loved. It seemed far more probable than to suppose the maid had done it; still, placing her under arrest, I hurried to the office of the murdered lady's lawyer.

"Your late client's only living relative is a niece, I believe?" I asked.

"Yes," asserted the attorney.

"Have you communicated the news of her aunt's death to her yet?"

"I am just doing so," he answered.

"Then do not post the letter before to-morrow," I said, "and now please give me the lady's address."

He did so, and leaving the office, in less than an hour I was on my way to the niece's home. Ringing the bell, I asked to see the lady.

The servant made some objection, saying her mistress was not well enough to see visitors, but she would take up my name.

"The name is of no consequence," I answered. "Merely tell her I came from Thornville."

The name, as I imagined it would be, was an open sesame at once, and following the girl up a flight of stairs, I was shown into an elegantly-furnished drawing-room. In a few moments the lady entered, and I was struck at once with her wonderful beauty. She was not more than twenty-six or seven at the most, and her dark Oriental loveliness was in the time of its fullest charm.

As I looked at her I regretted the task I had to perform. There was an anxious eagerness, as if afraid of betraying herself, in her manner, and her voice trembled in spite of her efforts to control it as she asked:

"You come from Thornville?"

"Yes, madam," I answered; "your aunt is dead."

Watching her closely, I could discern a fleeting look of exultation in her face, and I rose from my seat and advanced towards her.

"She has been murdered," I added, "and I arrest you for the crime."

As I imagined, she was not a hardened criminal. The deed had been done in the desperation of the moment to save the man she loved from ruin and disgrace. Now my sudden words had fallen upon her like a thunderbolt, utterly overthrowing her self-control, and she dropped upon her knees at my feet.

"Spare me," she cried. "I confess it. She was pitiless, and her death alone could save my husband. I loved him so that I was frantic when I thought of them dragging him away to prison."

In spite of myself, I pitied her. No doubt she saw pity in my face, and redoubled her entreaties.

"You will not arrest me?" she pleaded.

"It is my duty," I replied.

She rose to her feet, trembling in every limb, and a great mute agony on her face, such as I never wish to see again.

"You will at least let me retire to my room to change my dress?" she asked.

"It is impossible. You can take any article you wish, but I must accompany you."

She turned in silence towards the door of the inner door, I followed her closely. There was a wild look in her eyes that I did not like, and I mistrusted she might contemplate poisoning herself; but what did happen I had not foreseen. One of the windows was open, and as she came opposite to it, she stopped suddenly. She seemed about to fall, and thinking she was going to faint, I sprang forward to catch her. Before I could do so, however, with a wild, despairing cry, that rang in my ears for many a long day afterwards, she had dashed through the window casement to the street below. Cursing my own stupidity, I hastened downstairs; but before I reached the spot where she was lying, she had breathed her last.

HYPNOTISM AS AN AID TO THE SURGEON

HYPNOTISM in conjunction with anesthesia for use in surgical operations is strongly advocated by Prof. A. A. Friedlaender of Freiburg in an article in the Deutsche Revue. "Mesmerism," as it was then called, was employed first in 1845 by Dr. James Esdaile, who performed with it thousands of minor operations and about 300 capital ones without pain to the patient. And James Baird, a Manchester (England) surgeon, used hypnotism about the same time, but only when pulling teeth, opening abscesses and in similar minor operations. The value of their work was, however, lost sight of in the wave of enthusiasm for ether, chloroform and nitrous oxide.

Prof. Friedlaender has been using hypnotism before and during surgical operations ever since 1905, supplementing it with a narcotic, and he calls the combination hypno-narcosis.

The Lancet (London) says: "The advantages of hypno-narcosis in its author's hands are these: Light hypnosis induced before an operation will establish the patient's equanimity and prevent the natural anxiety associated with the operation and with the taking of an anesthetic. The principal induction takes place just before the operation, the patient then being slowly anesthetized so that the narcotic state supervenes upon the hypnotic.

"Narcosis ceases as soon as the operation is completed and hypnosis is again brought into use. The benefits are immediate. The amount of narcotic used is reduced by one-third or two-fifths of what would otherwise be required. Any toxic action is, therefore, of the slightest, after-effects being correspondingly reduced. The patient awakes from a sleep rather than from a narcosis.

"A similar treatment may be employed in childbirth, the patient being fortified by preliminary suggestion.

"Hypnotic after-treatment is directed to securing rest and sleep. In this way secondary hemorrhage is avoided, and the recourse to sleep-inducing drugs. Prolonged hypnotic sleep, extended over hours or even days, renders possible any special treatment of the patient, forced feeding and the establishment of physical and mental repose. All this without any alteration of the surgical department other than the addition of an assistant instructed in psychotherapy, for skill in inducing hypnosis is all important.

"Prof. Friedlaender sees a great future for hypno-narcosis. It is destined, he thinks, to become the common property of practising physicians and to play the part in therapy that anatomy accomplishes for surgery."

The Art Of Mike McCov

By GOTTLIEB JACOBS

CHAPTER ONE.

MISS ISABELLA SMITH, secretary-stenographer to James Kilgour, M. D., was alone in the doctor's great office. Miss Smith was weary with sheer fatigue. Her fluffy hair was disheveled, her eyes half blurred with weariness. Through the partly open windows she could see the sun setting, a dim red sphere in the heavens. Night was coming on; the office was already growing dark with gloomy, prowling, self-invited shadows. Wearied, hard-eyed men and women flitted past her vision, hurrying from their work apparently to the greetings that awaited them at their homes.

The phone bell rang. Miss Smith hated its onerous jangling, more than monotonous chirp. It goaded her—this ring, ring, ring. She had answered that inevitable sound innumerable times, and always, always the conversation had begun: "Hello! Doctor Kilgour's? Is the doctor in?" Those three short sentences always strained her nerves to the furthest tension. Especially so after a long, hard day such as this one when she had become mentally and physically exhausted.

She turned to the phone slowly. Anyway it was her duty. What if it did affect her sensibilities? She picked up the receiver from its hook and placed it to her ear. "Hello!" she called.

There came no answer. She spoke again, a bit more sharply, less indifferently. Still no reply wafted to her ear. She was about to hang up but thought better of the matter and called the customary greeting for the third time. She was unable to keep utter exasperation from her tone.

To her surprise there was a response. Her alert ear caught a faint appealingly emotional voice saying: "Doctor—Doctor Kilgour? . . . Is that you? Come, doctor, oh, come quick! God! . . . I'm done for—shot myself—tried to commit suicide. . . . Hurry!"

There were more incoherent words, but to Miss Isabella's ear there followed nothing more than a feeble drawling murmur.

Her peevish imperturbability was gone now; she was alert and tense with excitement.

"Who are you?" she half shrieked through the mouthpiece. "Who is speaking?"

"I'm Gregory Burnman, Tell'fair Square." Miss Isabella could barely catch the faint tones. "Come quick! I—I shot myself. I'm dying."

No more was audible. The voice droned incoherently. Only blank silence met her frantic queries.

Miss Isabella hung up the receiver. For a time she stared unseeingly into space. Then realization dawned upon her. She half arose with the sheer thought and terror of it. A vivid mind picture swam before her eyes. She could see it all—somebody committing suicide. Plucking up enough courage to fire the shot—then finding himself still conscious, losing his stubborn courage and calling for help, the voice growing weaker as the dying man grew weaker, then ceasing to sound at all.

Something snapped in the tired brain of the secretary-stenographer. The picture was too much for her. She buried her face in her hands, sobbing softly.

But only for a moment did she give way. The shock sudden as it was was due to leave as suddenly. Straightening up she threw back her fluffy hair and reached for the instrument of communication.

There was a chance of locating Doctor Kilgour at four different places. At the second call she found him, at a Mrs. McCall's it was, and she told him half hysterically yet all the more distinctly of the tragic telephone call she had received.

"Burnman!" the doctor repeated, his voice high-pitched and terse. "Why, he's an acquaintance of mine! Suicide, did you say, Miss Smith? Do you remember the exact words?"

"Almost," Miss Elizabeth informed him quickly. "They were faint and jerky, as if he was breathing hard. It—it went something like this: 'Doctor—come quick! I'm done for—shot myself—tried to commit suicide.' Oh, doctor, do hurry! I'm so upset. He might die in the meantime——"

Doctor Kilgour did hurry. Hastily informing Miss Isabella to call the police and direct them to Burnman's apartments, he thrust the telephone receiver into the hands of a staring butler. Then he caught up his satchel. And with a word to the servant over his shoulder he was through the door and into his car in split-second time.

"Suicide!" he mused aloud as he was carried swiftly down Sixty-fourth Street. "Suicide! Now I wonder—but Gregory Burnman always was peculiar——"

Ten minutes' hard riding brought him to his destination. Gregory Burnman lived in an exclusive apartment, having the entire first floor of the imposing house to himself. The doctor rang the bell, and as he did so the front door opened in his face. He entered, walking speedily through the wide corridor, his face an impatient frown. He stopped before the carved oak door of Gregory Burnman, pushed it open and entered.

There appeared to be no one in the room. A table that seemed to fill up the entire space wa

situated in the center of the chamber. On the other side of this table a huge window stood open to the world. Through this a mundane, unholy-looking light found its destination. Doctor Kilgour walked nearer to the window to investigate the partly drawn flapping window blind. He had perhaps taken a dozen steps when he stopped, appalled. The satchel dropped from his stiffening fingers. An exclamation sped forth from his open lips.

Crumpled in a grotesque heap, the fingers of one hand clutched tightly, his face a mask of horror, lay the body of Gregory Burnman. A yellow skinny hand held a corner of the white tablecloth. There was a dark stain on his linen—a crude circle of blood that grew and grew.

A blue-barrelled revolver that shimmered in the gloom lay at his side.

Doctor Kilgour, stooping swiftly, felt for the heart of the fallen man. Then he arose to his feet. His head shook slowly.

"Dead," he said simply. "He must have been in a pretty bad mood. Wonder what made him do it?"

He straightened the telephone on the table, and as he did so the sound of marching feet was heard. A moment later there came a sharp rap at the door. Doctor Kilgour looked up quickly. A man entered, then another; a third followed the pair. The last two stood respectfully aside, folding their arms, while the first stepped forward briskly.

"I'm Sullivan from headquarters," he announced. He was a grim-eyed, sour-visaged little man, barely more than a youth. "Somebody called up—suicide they said. Where is——"

Then for the first time the gleam in his eye caught the sight at Doctor Kilgour's feet. With a swift step he was beside the fallen man. A speedy examination brought him to the same tragic conclusion that the physician had reached.

"It's suicide or murder," he mouthed perfunctorily through drawn lips. "You're a doctor, I see. How'd you get here?"

Doctor Kilgour informed him.

"Yes," said the detective. "I see. Did you know this man?"

The physician nodded an affirmative.

"But not very well," he added. "He's a wealthy man from Los Angeles and I met him at the Travelers' Club. There are no relatives of his in the East, I understand, and hardly any in his home town. He was a very moody man, sometimes very sullen, and as a result hasn't made many permanent friends. Still, though, I can't account for his bringing on his own death."

The detective turned abruptly to one of the silent sentinels. He flourished his finger.

"Tom," he instructed, call up the coroner's office and have 'em send a man down." He turned, in the same brisk manner, to Doctor Kilgour.

"It's suicide all right," said Sullivan, advancing his theory. "Everything points to it. And his having told your—your secretary that he had shot himself clinches it. After having fired that shot and finding himself still off the dead list he must have gotten cold feet, called off the idea and telephoned for you. That's the most logical conclusion."

"That's so," the physician agreed. "It can't be anything but suicide."

The detective smiled coolly.

"Of course. And I'm mighty glad it is, too. If it was murder, first thing you know I'd be detailed on the case by the chief. And then I'd be sweating, night and day, day and night. You know the law is supposed never to rest, and I'm part of the law. But I want a rest, and the Lord knows I deserve it. I'm obliged to your secretary, and more so to—him!" He jerked a finger to indicate the dead man.

Doctor Kilgour nodded and started to go.

"One minute, please," the detective urged. "I've a feeling that the coroner'd like to see your secretary before he reaches a verdict. Those birds are careful. I've no doubt, however, he'll appreciate the facts in the case. Come to think of it, now what the injured man said to your secretary sure is important. The whole thing depends on it. The coroner'll want to know about it offhand. Do you know the exact words?"

"I don't," the doctor declared. "I haven't seen my secretary, and she doesn't know them either. But he called my office, as I have told you, stated specifically that he had shot himself and for me to come right here at once. That's all I know about the message."

"You'll want to make a report, won't you?" the detective inquired.

"Yes, of course. The bullet entered the region above the heart, near the solar plexus, producing death in about five minutes. I'll send a typed report to headquarters, and both Miss Smith and I can be summoned at any time, if necessary. But I don't want to be called to repeat the facts I have already given you. As to the killing itself, there's hardly a doubt that it was suicide. The facts in the case, as you say, point strongly to it. The coroner in such a case always is persuaded by circumstantial evidence, and he'll reach that verdict."

And the coroner did.

CHAPTER TWO

MICHAEL McCOY'S rapid walk had brought him to one of the lower precincts of the city. There were ancient-looking buildings here, buildings upon which Father Time and ill use had together laid heavy hands. Tenament houses, narrow alleys and devious courts, adorned by dirty, shrieking children, abounded. Mike McCoy increased his step, cut diagonally across the miserable vista, and halted at the doorway of a tottering wooden house which bore the legend "Restaurant."

He covered the single rise of the step and

drifted into the place. He nodded curtly to a familiar face, and made his way behind the counter and thence into a narrow corridor flanked by shrouded ill-smelling walls. The pass was terminated abruptly by a heavy iron-barred door. The gangster rapped swiftly on this and was admitted by a one-armed close-haired youth.

He was now crossing the threshold of an underworld den. The place was known as "Pete's." Here was congregated under the yellow glare of lights the element wisest to avoid on a dark deserted night. Lawbreakers of all descriptions were evident. Dirty unkempt women sat at the tables of manslayers, conversing wantonly and screaming their laughter. Men whose crimes showed in their faces sat eating at fly-teeming counters. Others were drinking liquor, a few were drunk, for the owner of "Pete's," whoever he was, had a pull with the local police regime.

Mike McCoy bowed stiffly to those that greeted him. He ignored a woman whose dark eyes flashed at him challengingly, and found an unoccupied table in the corner of the room. He dropped carefully into the seat and leaned forward on the table. A smile that hinted at triumph now played about his lips. He picked up the finger-printed menu, scanning it.

He looked up quickly. Someone had seated himself in the chair opposite him. The smile returned to his face as he noticed the companion. He tossed the menu to the side and locked his fingers.

There was a brief silence.

"Well?" began the newcomer thickly. "I been steerin' for you, Mike. Is it done?"

McCoy looked calmly into the death-white face of the other. His steady vision met the rust-flecked eager restless eyes. He noticed the tight drawn quivering mouth. He smiled in spite of himself.

"Yes," he said shortly. "Don't worry. It's done. He's breathing no more, Baxter. One, two, three and your revenge is complete."

The roving eyes of Baxter showed their relief. He was breathing hard now with sheer joy. His nerves were on edge.

"Good!" he exclaimed. "He's dead! After all these years. I'm grateful, Mike." His voice turned savagely. "You're dead now, Burnman. You ain't existin'. Damn your soul, and may it be sent to blazes. Yes, I got you as I allays said I would——"

He paused, his eyes glistening.

"You forget," interposed Mike McCoy, with a grin, "who it was that got him."

Baxter regarded him thankfully.

"I ain't," he averred with heat. "Nor am I forgettin' my part of the contract." He reached heavily into a pocket, drawing forth a wad of bills carefully stacked.

"Here!" he said. "Take it, Mike. You're welcome to it. You earned it. It's yours."

The gangster smiled again. He leaned forward. He stuck out a blue-veined hand that had grown callous from the constant contact with a safe-drill. Imperturbably he took the money and pocketed it slowly.

"Aren't you interested," he drawled, leaning back. "Don't you want to know how I blew him?"

"Sure!" said Baxter. "The cops!" He looked around fearfully. "How'd you do it, Mike? Ain't you afraid they'll get after you?"

Mike McCoy hunched his chair closer.

"No," he said forcefully. "They won't. It's going to rest, this killing—just lie down peaceful like and die pleasantly."

The other was interested.

"They think it's suicide," McCoy continued in quiet but accentuated tones. "No one's suspected. To begin with, the rest of the people in the house were out. I knew that; it is my profession to know those things. I'm good at my profession. It's an art, same as painting's an art. I entered Burnman's room, made a buzz so's he would turn, then drilled him through the heart. There was no noise; the gat was fitted with a silencer. I dropped it on the floor after taking off the silencer, and called up a doctor. Some jane answered the phone—they're apple-pie to gyp. I lowered my voice so 's she could hardly hear me. I said: 'Doctor—hurry—I'm dying—shot myself—tried to —commit suicide——' "

Mike McCoy paused. He watched the gleam of realization in the other's furtive eyes. He leaned back in his chair now, smiling.

"I guess that's about confession enough to nail you!" said a quiet voice at the nearby next table, and as a startled exclamation burst from Mike's lips a hand came down on his neck, and the cold muzzle of an automatic was pushed against his side. I'm Sullivan from headquarters. The Burnman suicide gun had your finger-prints on it, Mike."

Baxter grew cold and made a plunge to escape, but the little detective had a couple of assistants in the room, disguised like himself, and they nabbed the man who hired McCoy to kill his enemy.

Doctor Kilgour was astonished to learn how he had been deceived by appearances.

"That detective is as keen as a razor," he remarked to his stenographer. "Made me think he shared my theory of suicide and all the while suspected murder. No wonder ours is called the greatest police force in the world!"

Current News

AMERICAN UNEARTHS RUINS OF A GREEK CITY.

Ruins of a prehistoric city have been discovered by Professor Carl Blegen of the American Archaeological School at Athens. The city he has found was situated between Corinth and Mycenae, in southern Greece, and pottery and fragments of statuary unearthed fix the date of its prosperity at about 2000 B.C.

QUEER BELIEFS.

The people of Java believe that if a live sheep is thrown into the water it will indicate the position of a drowned person by sinking near it. A curious custom is practiced in Norway, where those in search of a drowned body row to and fro with a rooster in the boat, fully expecting the fowl will crow when the boat reaches the spot where the corpse lies.

GOLD IN THE STREETS.

Gold specimens worth $2 and $3 each were picked up on a newly macadamized street in Grass Valley, Cal., after a heavy rain. Dozens of miners spent many hours in the search and nearly all were rewarded with finds of some value. The rock with which the streets are macadamized came from mine dumps and contains gold-bearing quartz.

BABY A SWIMMER.

A baby girl of three, Rhoda Cavill of Australia, performed the amazing feat of swimming one quarter of a mile continuously in an exhibition in San Francisco recently. The achievement has no parallel in the history of swimming.

Rhoda is a daughter of Richard Cavill of Sydney, N. S. W., former champion of the world, who is credited with introducing the Australian crawl in competition. The tiny marvel learned to swim literally before she could talk.

UNLUCKY SHADOWS.

At Soochow, China, an American oil company had all the ground for its building, except for one small square. The owner refused to sell because the building to be erected would cast an "unlucky" shadow on the next lot, which he also owned.

The Yankee manager almost despaired when a Chinese assistant heard of the difficulty. He visited a geomancer—a sort of soothsayer, supposed to interpret the wishes of the natives—and returned with a drawing of a cheap bamboo tower, which was put on a spot selected after an entire day spent in pacing and measuring.

No sooner was the structure completed than the owner of the coveted property called on the manager of the oil company and offered to sell. The reason for the Chinaman's speedy change of mind was that the bamboo tower was so placed as to cast an "unlucky" shadow on the house that occupied the desired lot. —*Popular Science.*

THE MEANEST MAN.

A Turkish story runs, according to the Buffalo Commercial, that, dying, a pious man bequeathed to his son, charging him to give $100 to the meanest man he could find and $100 to the most foolish man is another story. As to the meanest, accounts agreed that a certain cadi filled the bill. Accordingly the dutiful son offered him $100. "But I can't take your $100," said the cadi. "I never knew your father. There was no reason why he should leave me the money." "It's yours all right," persisted the mourning youth. "I might take it in a pretended transaction," said the cadi, relenting. "Suppose—I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll sell you all that snow in the courtyard for $100." The young man agreed, willing to be quit of his trust on any terms. Next day he was arrested, taken before the cadi and ordered to remove his snow at once. As this was a command the young man was utterly unable to execute, he was fined $20 by the cadi for his disobedience. "At least," the young man said sorrowfully as he left the court, "father's $100 went to the right man."

SEARCHLIGHTS FOR BAIT FOR AVALON FLYING FISH.

This fish story comes from Avalon, on Catalina Island, twenty-five miles out in the Pacific from Los Angeles.

Catalina Island is noted for several things. It is a good place for goat hunting; it boasts the westernmost wireless telephone station in the United States, and it is the rendezvous for flying fish. Millions of them make their home in Avalon Bay.

The Catalina Excursion Company has equipped one of its boats with a giant searchlight and every night it scouts about Avalon Bay rousing thousands of flying fish out of their native haunts, much to the edification of the passengers. The flying fish craze has grown to such proportions that instead of one light the boat now boasts six, enabling it to arouse school after school of the peculiar creatures.

Where the voyagers formerly were content to recount in thousands the number of flying fish they had seen, it is no uncommon thing now to hear them talk about millions; many of them hurl themselves at the boat's lights, only to fall on its decks.

CIGARETTE HOLDER CUT FROM HIS WINDPIPE.

Loo Va Le, a Chinese boy of ten, was taken to the Shantung Road Hospital, Shanghai, a few weeks ago after "swallowing" a cigarette holder two and a half inches long, three-eighth inches in diameter at the wider end and one-quarter inch at the lower end, with a linen band one-eighth inch in diameter. Examination showed that this object had lodged in his windpipe and that all his breathing was being done through it.

An effort by Dr. N. Hay Bolton to get hold of the cigarette holder with forceps and pull it out failed, so the boy was chloroformed, the surgeon opened his throat, got hold of the lower end and withdrew it that way.

By artificial breathing the boy was kept alive until a tracheotomy tube could be put into place. The tube was left in for two days, and ten days later the boy began to talk.

DEVELOPMENT OF PALESTINE.

Rapid progress is being made in developing Palestine under British Government for the Holy Land is now governed under a mandate. There are 600,000 inhabitants of whom only 100,000 are Jews. The Turks did everything possible during the war to ruin the country. Palestine is a very small country, and an agricultural one resembling Spain or Southern Italy. There is much waste land which will be reclaimed by irrigation. It is believed that a second California can be created. Palestine now exports barley, oranges, olives, olive oil and wines. There are two growing seasons in the year, and the soil when irrigated is most productive. Near Jaffa there are 1,000 acres of vineyard. Almonds are grown there and wonderful oranges and grapefruit. The colonists are just beginning to develop the fruit growing possibilities, but to-day throughout Palestine one can see the terraced hillsides that made the whole country a garden 2,000 years ago and it will not be difficult to make the country a garden again.

800 ACRES OF SUNFLOWERS.

There are not many people who know that Missouri has a "sunflower king," but it is a fact that one farmer in this State makes a specialty of growing the floral emblem of our sister State of Kansas on a large scale for commercial purposes. He sells the seed to breakfast food makers.

He is Lee C. Phillips, of New Madrid County, Mo., who has 800 acres of sunflowers growing on his farm in that rich agricultural section. It costs him something like $8 per acre to grow sunflowers, and he markets the seed at from 3 to 4 cents per pound. The yield per acre, Phillips says, is from $35 to $50.

Phillips, who for many years was county clerk of New Madrid County, forsook politics several years ago and engaged in growing sunflowers. The corn, wheat, cotton and melon growers decided he was crazy at first, but the results have caused them to change their minds.

"I plant the seed very much like corn is planted and two plowings are sufficient to insure a crop," he says. "I sell my product direct to the houses that manufacture breakfast foods, but I don't know, of course, that sunflower seed enters into the production of articles of that kind. A large proportion of the crop is said to be used for poultry food."

LINES OF THE PALM BETRAY WEAK MINDS.

The three principal lines of the hand—those of life, head and heart—are normally present a few weeks before a child is born, all the others are acquired by use. In an address read recently in London by Dr. F. G. Crookshank, he said the early presence of those three lines was an example of the law of anticipation—that is to say, character acquired for the race by response to need tend to appear in successive generations in anticipation of the exercise for which they are adapted.

When an ill brought up child, an idiot, or an ape grasped a fork, a stick or a straw, not as we hold a pen or a knife, but across the palm, a broad transverse crease was made which showed how the lines of head and heart had been differentiated from one transverse primitive line suited to this primitive usage of the hand. Such a line was seen on the hands of many monkeys, and it was this single transverse line that was seen on the palm or palms of many Mongols, the word Mongol being used here to define a certain undeveloped type of mentality.

The lines on the palms of Mongols also tend to be very different on the right or left palms. This does not mean, however, that a straight line across the palm is a sign of imbecility.

A ROYAL GRAPEVINE.

James Jack, keeper of the famous grapevine at Hampton Court Palace, has retired after thirty-two years' active service as chief custodian of the King's vine. The vine was planted in 1768 by "Capability" Brown, the famous landscape gardener of the eighteenth century.

The vine is now considered one of the finest in the world. It stretches in wide, perfectly trimmed, squares, eighty feet by twenty-six, the whole length and breadth of the greenhouse. Two hundred bunches of grapes from it are sent to King George at Windsor every year. The grape is the old Black Hamburg.

Some years ago twelve bunches were shown at an exhibition of the Royal Horticultural Society and were awarded the Hogg memorial medal for special excellence and culture. Two of the bunches weighed 3 pounds 14 ounces each, and the whole twelve weighed about 42 pounds, an average of 3½ pounds each.

OLD WOMAN SWIMS.

Mrs. Eliza Steiner Eisenbels of Marshall avenue, North Side, Pittsburgh, Pa., is probably the oldest woman swimmer in the country. She is more than eighty years old.

Four years ago marked her entrance into the swimming world. She could just paddle around a little at that time, but swimming fascinated her and she soon became an expert.

Last winter she walked a mile to a swimming pool and missed but one night during the whole winter. One evening the class lacked its usual enthusiasm and spirit. The deficiency was traced to the absence of the spry old lady. Inquiry at her home brought the answer that there was a dinner and euchre party at a friend's house which she did not care to miss.

Until last year she was president of the athletic club at the McNaughter School. She declares she will continue her swimming this winter.

GREAT NATURAL STAGE SETTING DISCOVERED IN MOUNT ADAMS CAVERN.

Mount Adams, 12,220 feet high, is now believed to be a region of massive caves. All the trails leading to the peak rumble when travelled. Mouths of fissures yawn on every side. Some caverns have sunken and filled up, leaving serpentine ravines. One cave has been recently traced three miles without finding the end.

A party of mountaineers from the State University have just completed a survey of the caves. Some are filled with ice, and one, not over 400 feet long, is a marvel of beauty. Its external appearance is that of a big well, with shrubbery bending low into the aperture. Icy gusts of wind issue from this cave at regular intervals. The descent is made by a rustic ladder to a floor of ice. By means of large flashlights the explorers beheld a forest of icicles arising from the floor nearly meeting those hanging from the ceiling. These formations of ice are from ten to twenty feet long. In the far end they are so arranged as to resemble a huge icy pipe organ and it is from this point that the chill blasts arise.

On the eastern side of the mountain is a cave which takes the form of a gigantic air bubble which has hardened just at the time of gathering all the colors of the rainbow. The dome of this big cavern is more than 100 feet high and from three to four hundred feet in diameter on the floor. When the flashlights were trained on the curved walls a great natural stage setting was revealed. The walls are hued in various colors, blue and purple massed against gray and white. The reds and yellows are near the tops and darker colors toward the floor. In the center is a miniature bubble ten to fifteen feet high and which can be entered and explored. It appeared to be a mere shell of hardened lava.

The mountaineers explored thirty-four large caverns and discovered many more. Snow and ice and rainy weather interferred with a complete survey, but in August a large expedition under guidance of the National Geographical Society will be made to Mount Adams and the caves examined and photographs made. It is believed that this region will be found to possess native beauty and natural wonders to make it a great scenic attraction.

Mount Adams is between Portland, Oreg.; Yakima and Tacoma, Wash. It possesses glaciers, waterfalls and crater lakes besides the maze of caves. The formation is basalt and lined with veins of granite and shale. Lava in the ravines indicate a former eruption.

USE OF SNAKE STONES.

In nearly all accounts of snake charming in India the "snake stone" as a remedy for "snake bite" plays an important part. For when applied to the punctured wound it is said to absorb the poison gradually, and after one or two applications to eliminate it entirely. In the "Life" of that indefatigable hunter and naturalist F. C. Selous we find the following allusion to the subject:

"Passing through the Manica district of the Transvaal in November, 1881, Selous met one of the old Boer voortrekkers, by name Friedrich de Lange, who showed him a curious "snake stone," which was supposed to have the power to cure snake bite. De Lange valued this stone highly, and stated that its efficacy was invariable, and that it had already cured several people and horses that had been bitten by snakes. Selous himself was able to confirm De Lange's belief in the talisman, for he had met the daughter of one Antony Forman, who as a child had been severely bitten by a cobra and whose life was saved by applying the stone, which was applied twice before it drew out the poison. Selous had met the girl—then 16 years of age—in 1877, and she showed him the old scar.

"Apparently the rough side of the stone adhered to the wound until a certain amount of poison had been absorbed, and then it fell off. Several applications were necessary. It is probable that this remarkable stone had been brought from India."

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The feature stories already published in this magazine are worth reading. Here are the latest numbers:

NO.

36 "Trailed by a French Detective," by Rene Renaud.
37 "A Drop of Ink," by Lieutenant Robert W. Warden.
38 "The Ten Doctors," by Allan Arnold Fox.
39 "The Stain on Page 61," by Chas. T. Jordan.
40 "A Masked Mystery," by Police Sergeant Kelly.
41 "The Black Soul," by Beulah Poynter.
42 "Sanctuary," by William Hamilton Osborne.
43 "The Mystery of the Seven Shadows," by Charles F. Oursler.
44 "The Sign of the Dragon," by C. Martin Eddy, Jr.
45 "The Magic of Detective Woo Fang," by Frank F. Whitfield.
46 "The Decoy," by William Hamilton Osborne.
47 "The House With 30 Steps," by Ralph D. Porter.
48 "When the Clock Struck 13," by Dr. Harry Enton.
49 "A Piece of Blotting Paper," by Dorothy Weber.
50 "The $200,000 Mystery," by Ethel Rosemon.
51 "The Case of Dr. Brice," by Mary R. P. Hatch.
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53 "The Blackjack," by Wm. Hamilton Osborne.
54 "The Whispering Head," by Chas. F. Oursler.
55 "The Inspector's Strange Case," by Beulah Poynter.
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57 "The Clue of Steel," by Willis Lathrop.
58 "Alias Louis Vardon," by William Hamilton Osborne.
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60 "Caught With the Evidence," by Ethel Rosemon.
61 "A Little Gold Spider," by Cecil Burleigh.
62 "The Velvet Touch," by Julian Darrow.
63 "The Clue of the Red Lamp," by Chas. F. Oursler.
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65 "Quicker Than the Eye," by Ralph Cummins.
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68 "Detective Wade's Big Case," by Ethel Rosemon.
69 "The Spirit Bell," by Chas. Fulton Oursler.
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83 "The Clue of the Whorl," by Katherine Stagg.
84 "The 'Czar' and the Ring," by Edmund Elliot.
85 "A Clue of Flame," by Jack Bechdolt.
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87 "The Man in Room No. 7," by Chas. F. Oursler
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Birds have a sixth sense, a sense which we humans cannot conceive of, let alone describe. We can call it a sense of locality, but that is as far as we can go.

There are other creatures which share this sense. Take salmon ova from a Scottish stream, carry them in cold storage half-way round the world to New Zealand, and hatch them in a New Zealand river.

The little silvery smelts will in due course find their way down the river to an unknown sea where, until recently, salmon never swam. There they will roam to unknown distances, but eventually the survivors will return out of the trackless depths of salt water to the self-same stream where they were hatched and drive up it to the spawning grounds.

The people of Samoa hold holiday on a certain day in the year when vast shoals of a small fish resembling whitebait pass through the lagoons surrounding the islands and are netted in multitudes. I am told that the oldest inhabitant cannot remember a year when these fish failed to make their appearance exactly to date.

EX-SOLDIER STRIKES GOLD IN AN OLD INDIAN CAVE

Another Klondyke rush in Canada may be an event of the future, judging from the excitement aroused by the gold discovery at Kazubazua, Quebec, in the Laurentian Mountains, about 40 miles north of Ottawa.

The man who discovered the gold fields is Sgt. Maj. James Robert Bowen of the 224th Battalion, Montreal. Bowen is paying a visit to his native city, and is decked up like a millionaire.

Bowen said Indians told him that in 1820 there was discovered a secret cave—or, rather, a deep gully— surrounded by rocks. The sun never penetrates to the bottom of the valley, and it was there the Indians used to worship. White men arrived, and the Indians removed their idols.

Bowen visited the gully, met the owner and blasted a tree. The explosion threw up virgin gold. Bowen immediately made a partnership agreement with the old man.

Generous in his good luck, Bowen, after staking his own claims, let several of his overseas comrades in on the ground floor.

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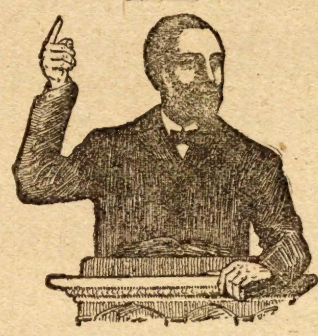

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"I had suffered agony for years from rheumatism and associated disorders, and Mrs. Reed was tortured with the demon neuritis almost beyond endurance. We had read and talked so much about 'Uric Acid' that our minds seemed poisoned. But the 'Inner Mysteries of Rheumatism' made it all clear to us and now we are both free from the suffering and misery we endured so many years. I believe I was the hardest man in the world to convert! For me to discard the old 'Uric Acid' theory, and what I now know to be absolutely false, for the new, scientific understanding of the causes and cure of rheumatism, was like asking me to change my religious beliefs! But I did change, and it was a fortunate day for me and mine when I did so."

NOTE: "The Inner Mysteries of Rheumatism" referred to above by Pastor Reed lays bare facts about rheumatism and its associated disorders overlooked by doctors and scientists for centuries past. It is a work that should be in the hands of every man or woman who has the slightest symptoms of rheumatism, neuritis, lumbago or gout. Any one who sends name and address to H. P. Clearwater, 534 F Street, Hallowell, Maine, will receive it by mail, postage paid absolutely free. Send now, lest you forget the address! If not a sufferer, cut out the explanation and hand it to some afflicted friend.

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After hair growth

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Photo when bald.

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That I was astonished and happy is expressing my state of mind mildly.

Obviously, the hair roots had not been dead, but were dormant in the scalp, awaiting the fertilizing potency of the mysterious pomade.

I negotiated for and came into possession of the principle for preparing this mysterious elixir, now called Kotalko, and later had the recipe put into practical form by a chemist.

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EX-MESSENGER BOY IS EXCHANGE MEMBER

There came to light recently the story of the rise of William Brandriss from a telegraph messenger boy to a member of the Stock Exchange with a seat for which he paid $91,000. In twenty-three years Brandriss has held two jobs. The first he kept a year and the other he still has—or had recently when official announcement was made that he had bought the New York Stock Exchange seat of John M. Anderson, deceased.

The new Stock Exchange member started at 13 as messenger at $4 a week. Then he came under the notice of J. J. Manning, the largest individual trader on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, who was impressed by the lad and offered a job to him as office boy in the Manning establishment. The youth accepted, and in a few years had worked himself up from his $5 office boy's job to that of office manager, which he has held down ever since.

Mr. Brandriss is 36 years old and since leaving school, twenty-three years ago, he has devoted a great portion of his leisure hours to educating himself and fitting himself for the work he has undertaken.

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